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**THACKER, SPINK & CO., CALCUTTA.**

A  
HANDBOOK FOR VISITORS  
TO  
**AGRA**  
AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY  
H. G. KEENE, C.I.E., M.A.,  
AUTHOR OF "THE FALL OF THE MOGHUL EMPIRE," ETC

**SIXTH EDITION.**

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## N O T E.

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THE following system of spelling, adopted by the Government of India, will be pursued throughout this book. It is, however, to be borne in mind that it is only *an approximation*, especially as to consonants, which, in many instances, cannot be correctly transliterated in English.

*a*, as 1st (a) in "afar."

*ā*, as 2nd (a) in "afar."

*e*, as (e) in "they."

*i*, as 2nd (i) in "gunne."

*u*, as (u) in "bull," or "rule."

Consonants require no further explanation.

[It may help the reader to remember that these sounds are expressed by the vowels in the English words "ruminant" and "obey;" excepting when they are accented, indicating a broader pronunciation.]

## TABLE OF DISTANCES.

---

AGRA					<i>From each other.</i> Miles.	<i>From Agra.</i> Miles.
Karaoli ... ..	...	...	...	...	16	
Fattehpur-Sikri ... ..	...	...	...	...	8	24
Bhurtpoor ... ..	...	...	...	...	13	
Kumbher ... ..	...	...	...	...	9½	
Deeg ... ..	...	...	...	...	12	
Govardhan ... ..	...	...	...	...	8½	
Muttra ... ..	...	...	...	...	14½	35
Bindrabun ... ..	...	...	...	...	5	
to Muttra (return)				...	5	
Furra ... ..	...	...	...	...	14	
Runkutta .. ..	...	...	...	...	10	10
Sikandra ... ..	...	...	...	...	5	5
Agra ... ..	...	...	...	...	5	

Bhurtpoor to Muttra ... .. 33  
*See Map.*

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE following pages are founded on the *Agra Guide* by the same writer which has long been out of print. Like that work they are not to be taken as an exhaustive treatment of the objects of interest with which the neighbourhood of Agra abounds. Although the writer has used his best endeavours to render his information accurate by verifying it from the best and most original sources, yet he has abstained from controversy and does not desire to be regarded as an antiquarian authority. His sole object has been to provide a little handbook containing all that is likely to be useful to the ordinary visitor and to others who wish for a general knowledge of Agra and its environs.

The following sentences are reproduced from the Preface to the *Agra Guide* :—

“Hitherto the only companion-book for the traveller, desirous of visiting the city of Akbar, has been a brochure published at Lahore professing to be mainly a Guide to the Taj, and founded on a Persian MS. originally translated in 1854. In his modest preface to the third edition (published in 1869), the author of this book sanctions the undertaking of a work on a more complete and systematic plan, for which, as he says, materials abound. The present work is offered to the public in no spirit of disparagement to its predecessor ; and the writer hereby tenders acknowledgment of much suggestion and help received from the *Guide to the Taj*.”



Thanks are here, as on the former occasion, tendered to many friends, both Native and European, without whose assistance this work would have been of little value.

It has not been thought proper to encumber the margins of pages with references, but pains have, nevertheless, been taken in regard to the authorities followed. In some instances local tradition and existing vernacular compilations have been used, but not, generally, without scrutiny. The *Ain Akbari* and the Memoirs of Jahángir and Shah Jahan, together with other original works, have been constantly consulted ; and it is believed that no conclusion has been placed on record as to any disputed point without the best evidence. Still the writer cannot but feel conscious of many defects in regard to which he can only urge that he has not aimed at anything beyond the scope of a popular handbook.

- - - - -

A  
HANDBOOK FOR VISITORS  
TO  
AGRA  
AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

---

**Agra** has no history of importance previous to the time of Akbar, who is said, after attempting to found a fortified capital at Fattehpur-Sikri, to have finally established his metropolitan palace here, in a far more suitable situation, A.D. 1566. It will, however, be seen lower down that this is one of the many untrue legends current in popular traditions. The buildings at Fattehpur were not begun till three years later than those in the fort.

It is believed that the name Agra is derived from **Agur**, a local word for a "salt-pan," the soil being brackish, and much salt having been once made here by evaporation. It had been a residence of the Lodi Kings, and was occupied by Babar after he had defeated Ibrahim Khan in 1526. The foundations of his city are to be still traced on the *left* bank of the Jumna. Babar died at Agra, A.D. 1530, and his remains lay at the Ram Bagh\* until a tomb was built for them at Cabul.

The place lies on the right or west bank of the river Jumna, about 300 miles above its confluence with the

---

\* In the Char Bagh, according to the *Akbarnama*, some miles lower down the river, and nearly opposite the Taj. The point is not of much consequence, as the body was soon removed, and no memorial left in either place.

Ganges at Allahabad. It is 841 miles from Calcutta, by rail; and 139 miles south-east from Delhi. The city walls comprise about 11 square miles, about half of which area is now populated, the rest consisting of ruins, ravines, and dusty patches of desert. The population is about one hundred and sixty thousand souls, of which fully two-thirds are Hindus.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, Agra was "a very great citie and populous, built with stone, having fair and large streets; . . . . it hath a fair castle and strong, entrenched about with a ditch. A great resort of merchants from Persia and out of India, and very much merchandize . . . . not above twelve miles from Fattehpur; a citie as great as London."—(*Calbanke's letter to Sir T. Smith.*)

There is a considerable trade in cotton and salt, which are brought to the city to be sent down by rail to Bombay and Calcutta. There is also a siding of the East Indian Railway, and a State Railway has been opened to Ajmir, which joins the Bombay and Baroda Line at Ahmedabad, and thus establishes direct communication with Bombay. The town is under a Municipal Committee, and is clean and well conserved. A girder bridge has been thrown over the Junna, by which the trains now arrive at the Junction Station facing the fort.

The traveller to Agra will find all the necessary information as to the best way of making the journey by reference to any respectable house of agency either at Bombay or Calcutta.

A description of the **hotels** is difficult in this country of constant changes, where such places are apt to depend, from time to time, upon the personal habits and means of those by whom they are held and managed. Persons representing them will be found at the railway station.

There is also a **club** where gentlemen nominated by two members of committee may be received as guests.

The principal **European station** is on the western and north-western sides of the fort and city, and con-

sists of the lines of the artillery and infantry, British and Native, with their accompanying staff officers. There is a large building in the Cantonment intended by its designers for a **church**, and still used as such. Being in the old "Military Board" style, it cannot be commended as architecture. Proceeding north, the traveller, keeping the city on his right, passes in succession the Magistrates' Offices, the Government College, and the Central Prison, arriving finally at the end of the Civil Station, where are the Judges' Courts and another church in a more ambitious style. Turning now to the right, the first conspicuous object is the Catholic Mission and Orphanage, a collection of large but not otherwise interesting buildings. This establishment is of considerable antiquity, being said to have been founded in the reign of the Emperor Akbar. No records of those days, however, are forthcoming. It is the seat of an Episcopal See, and of a benevolent and useful system of instruction for the sons and daughters of soldiers, hundreds of whom are here instructed in various branches of knowledge and fitted to earn their bread in life as they grow older. Attached to this foundation is a cemetery at the back of the courts containing tombs from the earliest date of the Christian settlement. The older inscriptions are all in the Armenian character, but there are some in Portuguese, dating early in the 17th century. Here too lie buried some of the officers of the Mahratta Service, ending with John Hessian, who commanded the fort down to his death shortly before the siege by Lake; and here, in a handsome Mausoleum, lie the remains of Walter Reinhardt, founder of the short-lived principality of Surdhana, and of the now almost extinct Dyce-Sombre family, whose long litigation with the British Government will be familiar to every one.

There are also **chapels** of several sects of Protestant non-conformists; and a handsome hall in the Greek style in memory of the late Lord Metcalfe serves the European residents as a place of public amusement.

There was also in the civil lines a **museum** founded by the liberality of Mr. Riddell, but Sir W. Muir, when Lieutenant-Governor, carried most of its contents to Allahabad.\*

The following description of Akbar's and Jahangir's Agra is taken from De Laet's *Empire of the Great Moghul*. (Amsterdam, 1631.)

"Before the time of King Achabar it is said to have been a mere village. Now it is a most spacious and populous city, whose streets (though they are for the most part narrow, with the exception of the one in which the market is situated) can scarcely accommodate the numerous inhabitants. It lies in the form of a half-moon on the banks of the River Jemini, or Soemena, which flows down from Delly, and which is overhung by many very beautiful palaces belonging to the nobles of the empire. The prospect towards the river is most pleasant for about six coss or more along its banks. Here, too, is situated the royal palace, the largest and most magnificent in the whole East. It occupies a site of nearly four square miles (English) and is surrounded on all sides by a wall of hewn stone, inside which is a double rampart. Within are the palace and court of the king, and many other buildings of extraordinary magnificence. The city itself is surrounded neither by a wall nor by a rampart, but only by a deep ditch. The suburbs are very extensive. It is said that King Achabar made this his capital in the year 1566, and constructed, for its protection and adornment, several gates, which are called Madhar Derwasa, Tziartzou Derwasa, Nim Derwasa, Pouto Derwasa, and Noery Derwasa. The site of the city is very long in proportion to its breadth; for every one has been anxious to have immediate access to the river, and all have consequently built their houses on the bank. . . . There comes next

---

\* There are some interesting antiquities preserved in the Fort. (v. p. 18.)

the royal palace, the walls of which are built of red stone to the height of twenty-five cubits, above a somewhat lofty site. The building is a stupendous one, and has a most delightful prospect, specially towards the river, on which side it has windows of lattice-work, from which the king is accustomed to look out at the contests of elephants. A little within this lattice-work is the king's residence, which is called the Gussul-can, built of alabaster in a square form, overlaid with golden planks in a gorgeous manner. Below this is situated the women's quarters (Mahael, they call it), occupied by Nourzian Begem, the most beloved wife of the former King Jahángir. The remainder of the palatial site is occupied by various buildings, amongst which the chief are the women's apartments, *viz.*, one set belonging to Maria Makany, the wife of Achabar and mother of Jahángir; then three sets, in which the concubines of the king are shut up, whereof one set is called Lettewar, from the name for Sunday; the second Mangel, from that of Tuesday; and the third Zenisser, from that of Saturday; on which days the king is accustomed to visit them respectively. In addition, there is a fifth set of women's apartments, in which foreign women are brought up for the pleasure of the king; this is called the Bengaly Mahal. On leaving the royal citadel, one enters on a large market, where horses, camels, oxen, and all kinds of merchandise are sold. Then follow the palaces of Mirza Abdalla, the son of Chan Azem, the commander of three thousand horse; of Aga Nours, also a commander of three thousand; Zehenna Chan, of two thousand; Mirza Chrom, the son of Chan Alems, of two thousand; Mahabot Chan, of eight thousand; Chan Alem, of five thousand; Radzia Bartzing, of three thousand; Radzia Mantzing, of two thousand. I find it noticed by the English that this city is distant from Lahore five hundred miles; from Brampore, a thousand; from Asmere, two hundred; from Suratte, seven hundred and seventy."

## THE FORT.

THE central object of Agra is undoubtedly **the Fort**, an imposing structure with vast red walls and flanking defences, surmounted everywhere by beehive crenellations. It is asserted to owe its origin to the advice of Sulim Chishti, the Saint of Fattehpur-Sikri. Traces of commenced fortification still exist at the last-named place, and it is supposed that the original intention of the monarch was to build his entire metropolis there. But, as already remarked, the fort buildings had been begun already, the reason being that Fattehpur was not found healthy, and perhaps that attention may have been directed to the great superiority of the situation of Agra upon a navigable river. The present fort was the ultimate result. The oldest buildings probably date from the reign of Akbar, and are built of the same red sandstone that is used in the external defences.

In front of the principal entrance was a walled square or piazza, called *Tripulia* or *Three Gates*, and used as a market place near the railway station. This was swept away in 1875 for strategic reasons, and nothing now exists between the Delhi Gate of the fort and the new railway station. To the north-west side opposite the gate of the fort is the *Jamma Masjid*, or Cathedral Mosque; it is situated on a raised platform and reached by a broad flight of steps, eleven feet high. The main building is divided into three compartments, each opening upon the court-yard by a fine archway, and each surmounted by a curious dome, in which white and red stone courses alternate in a slanting direction, of which the effect is very singular. We have the most complete certainty as to the era of this mosque from the obvious evidence of the inscription over the main archway, where it is very plainly stated to have been built by Shah Jahán in the year 1053 H. (A.D. 1644), and to have taken five years to complete. The date is also

given in figures at the left foot of the same archway. The following are the chief dimensions of the mosque :—

Length of Jamma Musjid ... 130 feet.

Breadth ... .. 100 „

Height of plinth ... .. 11 „

The mosque was built in honour of the Princess Juhanura, whose modest epitaph at Delhi has often been noticed by travellers. She is also famous for her devotion to her father, whose captivity she shared when he was deposed by Aurangzeb.

The walls of the fort are nearly 70 feet high, and about a mile and-a-half in circuit ; but it is understood that their strength is more apparent than real, and that the stone is little more than veneer over banks of sand and rubble. The outer enceinte is probably a later work, by Shah Jahán.

The fort, though not so substantial as it looks, nor built after the rules of modern science, is in a commanding position, overlooking the city and the river. In the troubles of 1857 it was used as a place of refuge for the Christian population, and was occupied by about five thousand combatants and non-combatants. Almost every nook that could give shelter from sun and rain was utilised, and the number painted on the outside of each quarter corresponded to a Directory which was prepared for the purpose.

The word-painting of Bayard Taylor will supply a good general description of the approach to Akbar's Palace :

“Crossing by a drawbridge over the deep moat which surrounds the fort, we passed through a massive gateway—*The Delhi Gate*—and up a paved ascent to the inner entrance, which shows considerable taste. It consists of two octagonal towers of red sandstone, inlaid with ornamental designs in white marble. The passage between them is covered by two domes, which seem to rise from accretions of prismatic stalactites as in the domes of the Moorish Alhambra. This elegant portal, however,

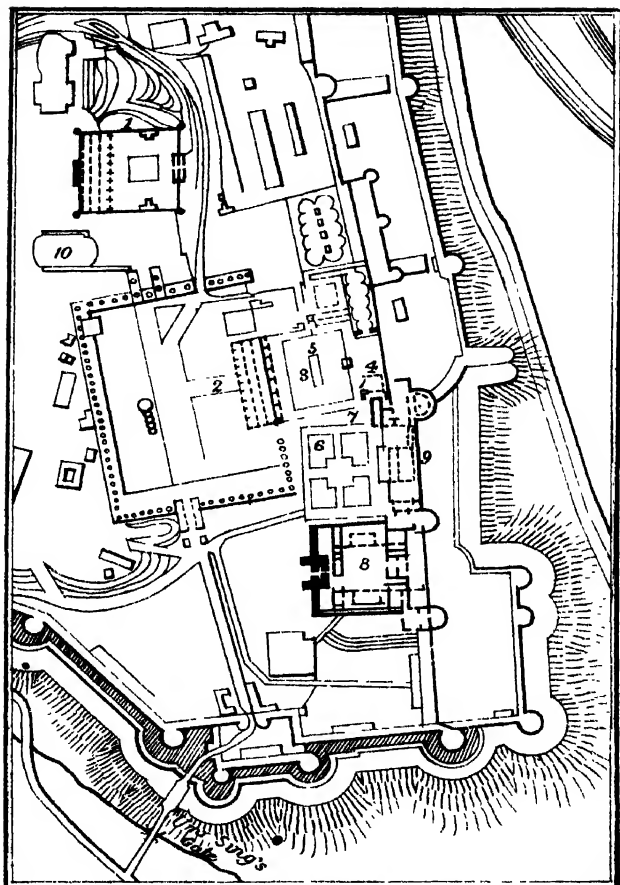


instead of opening upon the courts of the palaces, ushers you into the waste of barren inroads covered with withered grass. But over the blank red walls in front you see three marble domes glittering in the sunshine like new-fallen snow, and still further the golden pinnacles of Akbar's Palace; and these objects hint that your dream of the magnificence of the Great Moghul will not be entirely dispelled."

The inner gateway thus described is the *Hathi Pol*, or Elephant Gate, over or in front of which are supposed to have stood the statues called "Jaimal and Fatha," to be found described in the *Handbook to Delhi*, App. A. In the entrance, at the foot of the range, will be found an outer doorway with portcullis and drawbridge; in a small guard-room to the right of which is an inscription almost obliterated. It is to a similar purport to that in the Bolund Darwaza at Fattēhpur-Sikri and commemorates the return of the Emperor Akbar from his last campaign. Beneath is another of the same date as the later one on the Black Throne commemorating Jahāngir's accession.

Mr. Taylor then conducts his reader to the **Dewan-i-Am**, or Public Audience Hall, which in his time was used as an armoury, ancient and modern; the contents, however, have been since removed to Allahabad. From the inscription preserved by tradition, it appears that this building was not completed till 1094 H., the 27th year of Aurangzeb's reign. This building was once much defaced by the Department of Public Works, in the no doubt necessary process of turning it to modern purposes. But it has now been most correctly and tastefully restored under the auspices of Sir John Strachey, who was in 1876 the ruler of the North-Western Provinces. It was used for the entertainment of the distinguished party assembled to do honour to the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in January 1876, and the effect produced by its chaste and spacious appearance lighted by chandeliers will

# PLAN OF THE PALACES.



## REFERENCES.

HACKER, SPIRK AND CO

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>Moti Masjid</i>    | 6. <i>Anguri Bagh</i>    |
| 2. <i>Dewan-i Am.</i>    | 7. <i>Shish Mahal</i>    |
| 3. <i>Machi Bhaiwan</i>  | 8. <i>Jehangir Mahal</i> |
| 4. <i>Dewan-i Khas</i>   | 9. <i>Khas Mahal.</i>    |
| 5. <i>Chittore Gates</i> | 10. <i>Meena Bazar.</i>  |



never be forgotten by those who had the fortune to be present.

It was the public hall or court-reception-and-business-place of the palace, both much smaller than might be expected from such emperors as the Moghuls, and far inferior in grandeur to Westminster Hall, being less in all dimensions excepting the relative width. The interior dimensions are 192 feet by 64, and the roof is supported by colonnades which produce an effect strange to European eyes.

This forms the front of the palace. The vast court on which it opens was the *Carrousel*, or Tilt-Yard. In the cloisters on three of its sides the general public sate; here the *Ahulis*, or Exempts of the guard, paraded in full panoply; while the led horses, elephants and fighting animals were exhibited to the emperor and his nobles as they sate in the open hall. The hall was protected from profane contact by a red rail, admission within which is recorded by Captain Hawkins (Cir. 1613) as a proud privilege. The monarch sat on his throne, raised—as we still see it—on an estrade surrounded with marble inlay. At the foot of this alcove, on which this throne was placed, is a slab of marble, and here, according to tradition, Akbar took his stand in administering justice. But it is as well to bear in mind that the thrones and inlaid walls about them cannot be carried back earlier than the reign of Aurangzeb, when the present hall was built.

Passing to right and left are grated passages which admitted the ladies to view the proceedings—*durbars*, receptions, and trials—which took place within the hall. At the back of the throne a door admitted the emperor and his confidential adherents into the *Machhi Bhawan* leading to the more private precincts of the palace. Availing ourselves of the same access we come on what reminded Mr. Bayard Taylor of the Alhambra, and also of “a Palace of Fairies.”

The palace is indeed interesting and beautiful—inter-

esting as a monument of the domestic life of the past, and beautiful as a specimen of pure domestic Saracenic art. But it must not be supposed that it all belongs to the time of Akbar, its founder. On the contrary, very little of the interior dates from that monarch's reign. Whatever may do so is probably confined to the small group of sandstone buildings about the disused water gate and cannot (as Mr. Taylor seems to suppose) be made to comprehend the small quadrangle to the north of the Dewan Khas, south of which is the Anguri Bagh composed of marble pavilions with gilded roofs in the style of the Delhi Palace, and built by Shah Jahán before New Delhi. It is therefore an error to say, as Mr. Taylor does, that "no part of Akbar's Palace has been utterly destroyed," since it is probable that a great deal of it must have been deliberately removed by his own son and grandson. It is apparent from Finch's description that the *Amkhas* was always where it is now ; but the account of the fall of Adham Khan (A. D. 1562) shows that all the localities must have been altered since Akbar's time as they cannot now be identified.

"The Palace at Agra," says Fergusson, "is perhaps even more interesting than that of Delhi, being wholly of the best age. In the centre of it is a great court, 500 feet by 370, surrounded by arcades, and approached at the opposite ends through a succession of beautiful courts opening into one another . . . . . on one side is the Dewan-i-Khas [Am], 208 feet by 76, supported by three ranges of arcades. . . . . Behind are two smaller courts, the one containing the Dewan-i-Am [Khas] or private hall of audience, the other the harem. . . . . The greatest care was lavished on this court, which measures 170 feet by 235. Three sides are occupied by the residences of the ladies, not remarkable for their size, nor in their present state, for architectural beauty, but the fourth, overhanging the river, is occupied by three white pavilions of singular elegance. . . . As in most Moorish palaces the baths on one side of this

court were the most elaborately and elegantly decorated apartments . . . . the walls and roofs still show the elegance with which they were adorned." The following is Tavernier's description of a visit he paid to the palace in the early part of this reign (A. D. 1666)—descriptive of the Machhi Bhawan and Dewan Khas, as we now see them, nearly :

"Shah Jahán had undertaken to cover with silver all the vault of a great gallery which is to the right ; and a Frenchman named Augustin de Bordeaux was to do the work. But the Great Moghul seeing that in his state he had none who was more capable to send to Goa for some negotiation with the Portuguese, the work was not done ; for those who dreaded the intellect of Augustin poisoned him on his return to Cochin. This gallery is coloured with foliage of gold and azure, and the floor is covered with a carpet. There are doors below which lead into small square chambers. The three other sides of the court are all open with nothing but a slight balustrade. On the river side is a projecting Belvedere, where the king sits to see his yachts, and to have his elephants fought. Shah Jahán had meant to have the verandah of the gallery covered with a trellis of rubies and emeralds to imitate green grapes and those beginning to turn red, . . . . but the design proving too expensive remained incomplete."

The **Dewan Khas**, or Hall of Select Audience of Agra, is a small but beautiful building, consisting of two halls, not so large as those at Delhi and more Hindu in style but not otherwise different in decoration. The following are the chief dimensions :—

Length 64 feet 9 inches, breadth 34 feet, height 22.

The chronogram gives 1046 A. H. (1637 A. D.) To the river side is an open terrace on which are two open-air thrones ; one of white marble, the other of black slate with a long fissure said to have been produced when the throne of the Moghul was profaned by a Ját usurper. The tradition about the fissure is an allusion

to the temporary occupation of Agra by Jowahir Sing, Rajah of Bhurtpoor, who resided there for a short time in 1765, after his father Suruj Mull had been slain in battle with Najib-ud-Daulah (vide *Keene's Moghul Empire, Bk. II., Chap. 2*), and who was shortly afterwards assassinated in the palace. The chronogram on the Black Throne is 1011 H. (1603 A. D.), and the object of the principal inscription probably was to commemorate the recognition of Sulim, afterwards the Emperor Jahāngir, as heir-apparent. Mr. Beale, a local antiquary, was of opinion that this stone was brought from Allahabad in A. D. 1605, and that its inscription refers, not to Jahāngir's recognition by his father, but to his usurpation at that city a few months earlier. But this is all conjecture. The fact is that the Black Throne has two distinct inscriptions—the one antecedent to Jahāngir's accession, in which he is spoken of as "Shah Sulim, the heir;" the other, a few years later, where he is mentioned as emperor.

The next court contains a marble-pavement constructed for the game of *Pachisi*, a kind of Eastern backgammon or trictrac.

Below the *Devan Khas* and on one side of the Court of the Pachisi Board, is the **Saman Burj**, or "Jasmine-Tower," the Boudoir of the Chief Sultana; a beautiful specimen of carved and inlaid marble, recently restored by order of Lord Northbrook and his predecessor.

"The **Khas Mahal** is a small drawing-room of white marble, on the eastward commanding a view of the river, and the Taj, with a row of cusped arches to the west, looking out on the fountains, and parterres of the *Anguri Bagh*. The niches and groinings of the walls and ceiling were once richly decorated in gold and colours, a small specimen of which has recently been restored."

Next follows the **Anguri Bagh**, and it is here that the work of Akbar has been supposed to be traceable,

But if these three sides were built by Akbar, they were probably much altered by Shah Jahán to bring them into harmony with his new works on the river front. The effect of the square is at present poor. It consists, as above said, of the three sides of the small court of the zenana; and it was in these that the British officers and their families were chiefly accommodated during the terrible summer of 1857. Here, too, the Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon'ble John Russell Colvin, sank under the weight of care and sickness, and his tomb is hard by in the court-yard of the Dewan-i-Am.

"The substructures of the palace are of red sandstone, but nearly the whole of its corridors, chambers, and pavilion are of white marble, wrought with the most exquisite elaboration of ornament. The pavilions overhanging the river are inlaid, within and without, in the rich style of Florentine mosaic. They are precious caskets of marble, glittering all over with jasper, agate, cornelian, bloodstone, and lapislazuli, and topped with golden domes. Balustrades of marble wrought in open patterns of such rich design that they resemble fringes of lace when seen from below, extend along the edge of the battlements. The Jumna washes the walls seventy feet below, and from the balconies attached to the *zenana*, or women's apartments, there are beautiful views of the gardens and palm groves on the opposite bank, and that wonder of India, the Taj, shining like a palace of ivory and crystal about a mile down the stream.

"The most curious part of the palace is the **Shish Mahal**, or Palace of Glass, which is an oriental bath, the chambers and passages whereof are adorned with thousands of small mirrors, disposed in the most intricate designs."—(*Bayard Taylor*.)

The apartments which were the actual quarters of Shah Jahán, and which now contain the Museum of the Archæological Society of Agra, are also noticeable for containing the notorious gates of the Ellenborough



proclamation, and so-called of Somnath.' Mr. Fergusson argues with apparent truth that these are in reality the doors of Mahmud's sepulchre at Ghuzni, and never so near to Somnath as they are now. This curious instance of a myth without foundation, and capable apparently of being dispelled by the simplest evidence, is not easily to be paralleled among the mistakes of history. The plain truth that the gates are not of sandal wood, and at least the framework of Himalayan cedar, covered with Cufic inscriptions, should have been enough to suggest suspicion to any one possessed of the smallest pretensions to scientific observation.\*

These celebrated doors are about twelve feet high by nine in breadth, and are set in a carved frame that stands about five feet higher. They have a great number of square plaques about eight inches square let in all over their surface, some of which at least appear to be of different wood from the rest.

There is a large red stone building, the **Jahangir-i-Mahal**, to the south of this palace, with a fine two-storied façade, and relieving lines of white marble, which bears the name of the son and immediate successor of Akbar, the Emperor Jahángir, whose tomb is at Lahore. The two inner courts of this building, the largest of which is 70 feet square, are of massive style, in red stone, with boldly carved Hindu brackets that once supported sunshades in front of the upper storeys. Under these runs a moulding of lotus flowers

\* See also Appendix D for an argument on the same side by the well-known artist Mr. W. Simpson. On the other hand, it must be admitted that some of the wood is not deal or cedar, but whether the residuum be the original substance, or added in various times of repair, is not certain. Fergusson and Simpson are decisive as to the style; and I know not to whom appeal lies from their concurrent decision. The Rev. W. Tribe has deciphered the Cufic inscription on the framework, and finds it to be a tribute of praise to Sibaktagin—Mahmud's family name. He believes that this frame was a later addition to the rest of the doors.

(conventionalised), and each flower is supported on either side by a pair of birds of different kinds. The building is remarkable for the general avoidance of arches. Between the two main courts will be found a handsome entry supported upon pillars of a shape beautiful in itself and singular at Agra.

On the roof of this building are a number of cisterns into which the water of the Jumna was raised by a system of lifts of which the traces still remain. On the sides of these cisterns are the mouths of several copper-pipes by which the water was distributed to the various parts of the palace of which the respective names are engraved on medallions surmounting each pipe. On the same roof are two pavilions of massive form and elaborate ornamentation: one has been hopelessly spoiled by being converted into a residence for a warrant officer; the other is perfect. The halls on the ground floor are worthy of examination, especially that on the left of the main court as you enter. As Fergusson remarks (*Hist. Archit.*, II., 697), "it is singularly elegant in detail; and, having escaped the fate of so many of the palaces of India, time has only softened without destroying the beauty of its features." The stones were once covered (on the interiors and ceilings) with plaster exquisitely painted, but nearly all has now peeled off. The river-face is ornamented with carvings of elephants in the same red sandstone. The Dewan Khas and neighbouring buildings are recorded by Sir W. Sleeman to have suffered from the vandalism of two British rulers,—the latter of whom, Lord W. Bentinck, sold by auction a quantity of inlaid marble from this part of the palace. Very different is the spirit shown by the late Lord Mayo and the late Viceroy Lord Northbrook, who sanctioned a considerable outlay for the repair of what is left. Having been consulted as to these repairs, the present writer may be permitted to add that no "restoration," in the suspicious sense of that word, has been attempted; nothing beyond stop-

ping and removing alterations and putting the buildings, as far as possible, into their original state, or protecting them from dilapidation.

Turning back in a north-west direction through the Palace of Shah Jahán, we can proceed from the Machhi Bhawan to a small mosque formerly appropriated to the use of the inmates of the palace. Between are the bronze gates from Chittur and some good stone-work. Here is a gate leading into the court-yard that fronts the palace, surmounted by a covered gallery for the ladies of the imperial zenana. At the right hand is a gap in the wall of the great court-yard leading to the foot of a staircase, leading laterally to the gateway of the principal mosque of the fort, the Moti Musjid.

The general notion of Shah Jahán's Mosque may be gathered from Mr. Taylor's enthusiastic language :

"This is the **Moti Musjid**, or Pearl Mosque, as it is poetically and justly termed. It is, in truth, the pearl of all mosques of small dimension, but absolutely perfect in style and proportion. It is lifted on a lofty sandstone platform, and from without nothing can be seen but its three domes of white marble and gilded spires. In all distant views of the fort these domes are seen like silvery bubbles which have rested a moment on its walls, and which the next breeze will sweep away. Ascending a long flight of steps, a heavy door was opened for me, and I stood in the court-yard of the mosque on its eastern side, and the pure blue of the sky over-head. The three domes crown a corridor open towards the court, and divided into three aisles by a triple row of the most exquisitely proportioned Saracenic arches. The Moti Musjid can be compared to no other edifice that I have ever seen. To my eye it is absolutely perfect. While its architecture is the purest Saracenic, which some suppose cannot exist without ornament, it has the severe simplicity of Doric art. It has in fact nothing which can properly be called ornament. It is a sanctuary so pure and stainless, revealing

so exalted a spirit of worship, that I felt humbled, as a Christian, to think that our noble religion has never inspired its architects to surpass this temple to God and Mahomed." Much of this enthusiasm is deserved. But it is not true that the mosque is perfect in style ; it is indeed only the beginning of the decadence like its contemporary the great Mosque of Shah Jahanabad. The lines are stiff and unaspiring. "Its beauty," says Fergusson, "resides in its court-yard, which is wholly of white marble from the pavement to the summit of the domes . . . it is . . . less ornamented than any other building of the same pretensions." The general design is architecturally feeble, but the pure light and shade of the material gives the buildings a spiritual air. There is perhaps nothing to which this mosque can be more aptly compared than to the Evening of Wordsworth's sonnet—"quiet as a nun breathless with adoration." And at certain angles it has its complications and a mystery of perspective not to be found at the Taj. This arises from its having 24 engrailed arches and groined vaults which intersect each other very gracefully when looked at from the outer corners. At each end there are marble screens of floriated tracery, beautiful in themselves, though perhaps somewhat out of harmony with the generally unadorned nature of the building. The lun should not wear a collar of point-lace. The mosque occupies a length of 142 feet by a depth of 56, the front court being about 100 more from mosque to gateway. It is on the very crown of the fortified plateau, and rises far above the parapets so as to be a conspicuous object from a distance. It is truly wonderful that it has so long escaped the shocks of war and weather. During the occupation of the fort by British refugees in 1857, the Moti Musjid was used as a hospital, but it is now scrupulously respected.

The inscription over the front of the Moti Musjid shows that it was built by Shah Jahán in 1063 H. (1654).

In front of the *Khas Mahal* is a little stair with a

door leading by it down into a labyrinth of underground buildings probably intended as a retreat in the summer, and a means of passing to the **baoli**, or **well-house**, in the south-east angle of the fort now used as military cells. These call for no particular remark, except in regard to the above-mentioned *baoli*, or well-house, which occupies the south-east corner, and which communicate with the *Khas Haveli* by a subterranean passage. The object of this doubtless was that in the heats of summer, the Emperor and his chosen companions might have the means of changing air and scene without exposure to the glare and hot wind that raged above. Descending at early morning, and followed by attendants with fruit and music, the royal party could wander about the labyrinths that honey-comb the fort in this direction, and whose windows looking on the river may be observed at the base of the Palace of Jahángír. Arriving at the *baoli* they could seat themselves on cushions in the chambers that surrounded the water of the well, and idle away the sultry hours in the manner so fondly dwelt on by Persian poets.\*

The glories of the Agra Palace must have been of short duration. Jahángír, son and successor of the founder, lived and died, chiefly in northern latitudes, and in 1639, Shah Jahán, the next emperor, began the palace of New Delhi, where he thenceforth principally resided until 1658, when he was deposed by his son Alungir (known to Europeans by his title of Aurangzeb) and placed in confinement at Agra, where he remained until his death in December 1666. In Aurangzeb's time the fort became merely the citadel of a provincial town, and the residence of a Moghul governor, till it was occupied by the Bhurtpoor Jâts about a century later. In 1788 it was recovered by imperialists under Mahdajee Sindhia, and held by the Mahratta troops in

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\* A watch, with the maker's name "Steir" and the date 1674, was found there some years ago.

the name of the emperor till the end of 1803. Shortly after the Franco-Mahratta army had been defeated at Delhi, General Lake invested the fort ; and the Mahratta troops, who had at first risen against their European chiefs, finally availed themselves of the good offices of the Governor, Colonel Sutherland, and capitulated. The marks of Lake's cannon balls are still shown in the marble screen work of Shah Jahán's Palace. It is, however, pretty certain that this is another mistake, and that these are the traces of some earlier bombardment. The late Mr. Wright, who came to Agra with horses for Hessing\* in 1800, pointed out Lake's batteries on the Taj side ; and it is known, that his army entered the fort by the Umur Sing Gate. This fine gateway (which was not mentioned by Finch) was probably added by Shah Jahán, when the rest of the outworks were added (*sup.*, p. 7), and the chief, after whom it is named, is known to have been cut down in that emperor's durbar in A. D. 1644. Whatever was the occasion of the building, it is very elegant ; and when adorned with glazed tiles in bright enamel must have presented a very striking appearance. In this gateway is the prison for British officers, fortunately not often used. Outside, and to the right of the outer gate, the head of a buried horse in red sandstone will be observed on the glacis. Nothing is known accurately of this sculpture or of a similar one, wholly exposed, to the left of the road to Sikandra. It has been suggested by Mr. Benson that these two statutes record the fate of the horse ridden by Salim Shah Sur, when he ran his fox to Badalgarh. Between the deposition and death of Shah Jahan in 1666 (the date of the Fire of London) the fort had been the scene of many military and political events of minor importance, of which a summary will be found with their respective dates at the end of the volume.

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\* Vide *sup.*, p. 3.

Besides the Delhi and the Umur Singh Gates there was a third, towards the river, now disused and blocked up. Finch, the mariner, who visited Agra in the time of Jahāngir, speaks of a fourth gate—the *Darsani Darwaza*—in front of which executions and beast-fights used to take place every Tuesday ; but it was the same.\*

The portrait statues of the defenders of Chittur which Bernier saw at Delhi were originally set up in front or on the top of one of the interior gates, as mentioned in p. 8. The remains of the statues are believed to have been found at Delhi in 1863, where one elephant has been restored but misdescribed.

Before leaving this part of Agra, it will be well to drive along the strand road by the river-front of the fort and observe its situation. Professor Blochmann in his notes on the *Ain* (p. 380) records that it was raised here on the site of an older Pathan Castle by Quasim Khan, Akbars *Mir Bahar* or "First Lord of the Admiralty," the old fort having become dilapidated, first by an earthquake in 911, and afterwards by an explosion which happened in 962 (*temp.* Humáyun).

It is believed that the actual founder of the fort was Sulim Shah, son of Sher Shah, who held power during the interregnum of Humáyun (A.D. 1545-53), and this may account for Mr. Fergusson's opinion that there was a palace of Sher Shah's in the fort. It is not known that any fragment of the older buildings still remain, that mentioned by Fergusson as having survived the British demolitions being considered by the natives as having formed the *naubatkhana*, or drum-stand of Akbar's Palace, and being entirely in the style of that monarch's time. Sulim's Fort was called Badalgarh, and is generally stated to have been entirely demolished by Akbar in founding the existing fort.

The story told by native historians is that Sulim was out hunting and had loosed a leopard (*chitah*) upon a

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\* *Vide Handbook to Delhi, App. A.*

fox which he was following on horseback along the river-shore. When he got near to the site of the present Umur Sing Gate, he saw that the fox had recovered wind and escaped. He immediately called out that the air of that place must be very good, and he would build there a residence. It was accordingly built, and called Badalgarh. In Bernier's time this part of the strand was lined by the villas of the nobility. "Kings have already resided a long while, viz., since Akbar who cause it to be built, and called it after his name **Akbar-abad**; it is of greater extent than Delhi, and hath more of those fine houses of the *omrahs* and *rajahs*, and more of the fair *Karvansarhs*, as also more of those pretty houses of stone and brick belonging to particular persons; besides that it hath two famous tombs, of which I shall speak hereafter. But then it hath these disadvantages, that it wants walls; that having been built altogether by one design, it hath not those fair and large streets of uniform buildings as Delhi; and that, excepting four or five of those principal streets, of merchants, which are very long and well enough built, all the rest, for the most part, is nothing but a number of little streets, straight without proportion, and nothing but windings and turnings, which causes strange confusions when the court is there. I see no other difference between Agra and Delhi than that I have been just now speaking of; except it be that Agra hath more of a country town than Delhi, especially when we look upon it from a higher place. But 'tis not such a country aspect as disgraceth it, but a very agreeable and divertising one: for, there being betwixt the houses of *omrahs*, *rajahs*, and others, store of big green trees mixt, every one having been curious to plant them in his garden and in his court for shade; and besides, those high houses of the *banians*, or heathen merchants, appearing here and there between those trees, as reliques of old castles of forests; all that causeth within the town very pleasing sights and per-



spectives, especially in a dry and hot country, where people's eyes seem to desire nothing but verdure and shade."

In this direction all traces of this magnificence have long since disappeared, owing to the invasions of the river. The remains of one house alone are in any degree of preservation ; it bears traditionally the name of Rumi Khan, a Turkish General of Artillery.

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### THE TAJ.

By the river strand is a road made in the famine relief operations of 1838 by which the visitor reaches the **Taj Mahal**. On the way he passes the remains of several villas once occupied by the nobles of the Moghul Court, but now fallen into undistinguishable ruins with the abovenamed exception. The following remarks from Fergusson may be taken as a general introduction to this building, the reader being referred to the full text for a more complete development of the subject. The Tartars, we are told, from whom the Indian Moghuls are descended, "built their sepulchres of such a character as to serve for places of enjoyment for themselves and friends during their lifetime . . . . The usual process is for the king or noble who intends to provide himself a tomb to enclose a garden outside the city walls, and in the centre of this he erects a . . building crowned by a dome . . . . on a lofty square terrace . . During the life of the founder the central building is called a *bara durri*, and is used as a place of recreation and feasting by himself and his friends. At his death its destination is changed, the founder's remains are interred beneath the central dome . . . When once used as a place of burial, the vaults never again resound with festive mirth."

The historical account of the person in whose honour the Taj was built does not altogether illustrate this

description, as she appears to have died before the building had been begun. In all probability, however, the garden had been already enclosed and was a favourite retreat of the deceased in her lifetime. A similar garden (to be hereafter noticed) still exists on the opposite bank about three miles higher up the stream.

Arjumand Banu Begum, called *Mumtaz-i-Mahl*, or "Exalted One of the Palace," was not related to her husband the Emperor Shah Jahán, further than that she was the niece of his stepmother. Her father was the minister, Asaf Khan, brother of the celebrated Nur Jahan, wife of the previous Emperor Jahángír, in whose time he (Asaf) played many parts, but mostly as catspaw to his able and ambitious sister. Their father, again, was Mirza Ghias, an adventurer from Teheran in Persia, who attained high place during his daughter's tenure of power, and was honoured by Jahángír with the title of *Itmad-ud-Daulah*, and will be again mentioned in connection with his tomb already referred to. Married to Shah Jahán (then heir-apparent) about 1615, she bore him seven children, and died in childbed of the eighth, about 1630, at Burhanpur, whither she had accompanied her husband on his campaign in the Deccan against Khan Jahan Lodi. Her body was carried to the metropolis, and laid in a spot in the garden, still pointed out, close by the mosque, until the mausoleum was ready for her reception.

We learn from Father Manrique (a Spanish monk of the Augustinian Order, who was at Agra in 1641) that the plans and estimates were prepared by a Venetian, by name Geronimo Verronco. The emperor ordered him to estimate for three *krors* of rupees. Verronco died at Lahore before Manrique's arrival, and long before the work was completed. The work is then believed to have been made over to a Byzantine Turk. But Austin, the French artist, was certainly consulted as to the inlay before it was completed. The collection

of the materials is to have occupied the next seventeen years; but it is not necessary to suppose that no building was in progress all this time. *Ars longa, vita brevis*; and the emperor, who had passed his five and thirtieth year at the commencement of the work, is not likely to have loitered so much in its completion. The last inscription, moreover, yields 1648. The following description of the various dates seem to show the order in which the various parts of the building were completed.\*

On the outside of the west arch facing the mosque is the date A. H. 1046, 10th year of Shah Jahán.

At the end of the inscription on the left hand side of the entrance (within) is the date A. H. 1048.

On the front gateway is the date A. H. 1057 (A. D. 1648) marking the completion of the building. The inscriptions on all these arches are in the Toghra character, taken from Suras of the Koran, appropriate to mourning and spiritual hope. On the front of the entrance is a passage ending with an invitation to the pure of heart to enter the Garden of Paradise.

On the tomb of his wife the emperor has caused to be inscribed sentences in her praise in the usual Persian style. There is also an inscription recording her name (Arjumand Banu Begum) together with the date of her death.

On his own tomb the date of the death of Shah Jahán is given together with a recital of his titles, among which is the curious one of *Sahib-i-Qirán 2nd*. In a recent Dictionary lithographed at Lucknow, I find it explained that Timur (Tamerlane) was also a Sahib Qirán; and that he was so called because there was at the time of his birth a *Qiran* or conjunction of Jupiter and Venus. Richardson, in his Dictionary, under the word *Qirán*, says, it stands for nearness; but that when Jupiter and Venus are in the same house, their conjunction is called *Qirán-i-sa' a dayn*. From this it would seem that Shah

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\* See Tavernier's record, *supra*, p. 11.

Jahán was the first descendant of Timur, who was born under the same stars as his ancestor. The omen did not do him much good.

The white marble that forms the facing of the building came doubtless from Makúana, near Jaipur, and the red sandstone from Fattēhpur-Sikri; the jewels are partly Indian and partly from Persia and other trans-Himalāyan regions.

The native annalist is very copious on the names of the artists who worked under the Effendi, and the cost of the various articles; but the latter is a point on which we possess scant means of comparison, as we are ignorant of the purchasing power of money at the time, and of the extent to which goods and labour were purveyed without any sort of payment. [Shah Jahán's memoirs state that the masons received thirty lakhs of rupees; and no doubt this was the item of wages charged in the accounts.] And as for the former it would not possess much interest for us if we were sure that the names of a number of oriental masons and jewellers were given correctly, unless indeed there were found an European name among them, which is not the case. Much fruitless discussion has been waged on this subject; the following considerations alone are likely to be of use to the general reader. The notion that the Taj was designed by Italians is confirmed by Manrique. But nothing can be less Italian than the general conception of the building with its simple and even stiff contour; nothing ever more in harmony with the style of Eastern feeling which regards a white muslin tunic and an aigrette of diamonds as full dress for an emperor. The tomb of Humáyun (A.D. 1556) seems to have been the chief model of the elevation. It is otherwise however with the inlaid work, or Indian *pietra dura* as I propose to call it; though specimens of this art occur here and there in earlier buildings, yet we have only to compare the Taj *pietra dura* with that of the palace or of Itmád-ud-Daulah's tomb (to go back no earlier) and

be convinced at once that some new element had entered into the design and practice. Instead of the geometric patterns of the earlier buildings, flowers are now fully introduced, and are in numerous cases treated with an attempt at realism which savours rather of Europe than of the East. It is urged that these flowers lack perspective, but this is not always the case; and there are instances of shaded petals and of reversed leaf-ends which exceed the limits of the true conventional. When we add to this the recollection that this was the era that immediately followed that of the Medicean Chapel at Florence—I believe the earliest modern Florentine work in *pietra dura* dates from about 1570 A. D., and that at least one foreign artist, Austin de Bordeaux, was certainly at that time in Shah Jahán's service—it will be seen how extremely probable it is that the art of inlaying did at that time become modified by European ideas. The portrait of Austin in *pietra dura* was once to be seen at the back of the throne in the Dewan-i-Khas at Shah Jahán's Palace in the fort of New Delhi, and he died in India. He is mentioned by Bernier and Tavernier, and his career closed before Shah Jahán's death. The following figures are taken from the *Guide to the Taj*:—

“The native account of the cost of the Taj gives 98,55,426 rupees as having been given by the rajahs and nawabs. And out of the emperor's private treasury 86,09,760 rupees, which would give in £1,846,518-6, or nearly two millions.\* There are said to have been two silver doors at the entrance of the Taj, which are stated to have cost 1,27,000 rupees and were studded with 1,100 nails, each having a head made of a Sonat rupee; these gates were taken away and melted down by the Jâts when they attacked and sacked Agra.”

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\* Colonel Anderson, in a paper in the *Calcutta Review* states the cost to have been Rs. 4,11,48,826. Manrique, as we have seen, puts the estimate at three *krors*; it must have been unlike most estimates if it was not exceeded in the end.

Fergusson makes the following just remarks on the taste that has been everywhere shown in the choice of this ornamentation :—"It is lavishly bestowed on the tombs themselves, and the screen that surrounds them, though sparingly introduced on the mosque that forms one wing of the Taj and on the fountains and surrounding buildings. The judgment, indeed, with which this style of ornament is apportioned to the various parts is almost as remarkable as the ornament itself."

The labour was all forced, and very little payment made in cash to the 20,000 workmen who were said to have been employed for 17 years in the construction of this wonderful pile; an allowance of corn was daily given them, but even this was carefully curtailed by the rapacious officials placed over them. There was great distress and frightful mortality among them, and the peasantry around Agra certainly did not worship the memory of the innocent empress. The poet describes them to have cried out—

"Have mercy God on our distress,  
For we die, too, with the Princess."\*

Bayard Taylor's description of the general *coup-d'œil* is so picturesque and at the same time so generally just that the reader may like to enjoy a portion of it here—

"The Taj stands on the bank of the Jumna, rather more than a mile to the eastward of the Fort of Agra. It is approached by a handsome road cut through the mounds left by the ruins of ancient palaces. Like the tomb of Akbar it stands in a large garden, inclosed by a lofty wall of red sandstone, with arched galleries around the interior, and entered by a superb gateway of sandstone, inlaid with ornaments and inscriptions from the Koran, in white marble. Outside of this grand portal, however, is a spacious quadrangle of solid masonry, with an elegant structure, intended as a caravanserai on the

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\* Guide to Taj, p. 15.

opposite side. Whatever may be the visitor's impatience, he cannot help pausing to notice the fine proportions of these structures, and the rich and massive style of their construction. The gate to the garden of the Taj is not so large as that of Akbar's tomb, but quite as beautiful in design. Passing under the open demi-vault, whose arch hangs high above you, an avenue of dark Italian cypress appears before you. Down its centre sparkles a long row of fountains, each casting up a single slender jet. On both sides, the palm, the banyan, and a feathery bamboo mingle their foliage; the song of birds meets your ears, and the odour of roses and lemon flowers sweetens the air. Down such a vista and over such a foreground rises the Taj."

The rest of Mr. Taylor's description, though very eloquent, need not be reproduced: first, because it is too vague and enthusiastic; and next, because it is absolutely inaccurate as to many particulars. The truth is that the Taj is not, as an architectural group, altogether satisfactory. Some adverse criticism will be found in the Appendix (A., 129). In a later paper, possibly by the same hand, it is well said that "there is no mystery, no sense of partial failure, about the Taj. A thing of perfect beauty and of absolute finish in every detail, it might pass for the work of genii, who knew nought of the weaknesses and ills with which mankind are beset . . . . It is not a great national temple erected by a free and united people; it owes its creation to the whim of an absolute ruler who was free to squander the resources of the state in commemorating his personal sorrows or his vanity."

Hence the building has an individuality, a sort of egotism, which takes it out of the category of ordinary architectural works. Zoffany's criticism (that "it only wanted a glass-case") is not quite correct, because the most accurate marble models are always ineffective in showing what it owes to size. Yet there is in the rigidity of the outline and the flatness of the surfaces

something that strikes, at least the European eye with an air of littleness and of luxury rather than with the effect of a grand constructive group. No beholder would at first suppose that the Taj was higher than the Kutub at Delhi.

Nevertheless in its symmetry, and above all in its material and ornamentation, there is a sort of satisfaction which tends to grow upon one the oftener it is beheld. As a distinguished Russian artist observed to the writer—"The Taj is like a lovely woman: abuse it as you please, but the moment you come into its presence, you submit to its fascination." Admitting that there is something slight and effeminate in the general design, which cannot be altogether obliterated or atoned for by beauty of decoration, the simile seems just, and it calls to mind the familiar couplet in *The Rape of the Lock*—

"If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look in her face, and you'll forget them all."

In Bernier's time the building seems to have been in much the same state as now. The following characteristic extract gives the chief portion of his description:—

"It is a great and vast *dome* of white marble, which is near the height of that of our *Val de Grace* in Paris surrounded with many turrets of the same matter with stairs in them. Four great arches support the whole fabrick, three of which are visible; the fourth is closed in by the wall of a hall, accompanied with a gallery, where certain *mullahs* (entertained for that end) do continually read the *Alcoran*, with a profound respect to the honor of *Taje-Mehalle*. The mould of the arches is enriched with tables of white marble, wherein are seen engraven large Arabian characters of black marble, which is very agreeable to behold. The interior or concave part of this dome, and the whole wall from top to bottom, is covered with white marble; and there is no place which is not wrought with art, and hath not its peculiar beauty. You see store of agat, and such sorts



of stones as are employed to enrich the chappel of the great Duke of Florence; much jasper, and many other kinds of rare and precious stones, set a hundred several ways, mixed and enchased in the marble that covers the body of the wall. The quarries of white and black marble, that make the floor, are likewise set out with all imaginable beauty and stateliness.

“Under this dome is a little chamber inclosing the sepulchre which I have not seen within, it not being opened but once a year, and that with great ceremony, not suffering any Christian to enter, for fear (as they say) of profaning the sanctity of the place: but really by what I could learn, because it hath nothing rich or magnificent in it.

“There remains nothing else than to give you occasion to take notice of an ally in the fashion of a terrace, twenty or twenty-five ordinary paces large, and as many or more high, which is betwixt the dome and the extremity of the garden, whence you see below you, at the foot of it, the River of *Gemna* running along, a great campaign of gardens, a part of the town of Agra, the fortress, and all those fair houses of the omrahs that are built along the water. There remains no more, I say, then to cause to observe this *terrasse*, which taketh up almost the whole length of one side of the garden, and then to desire you to judge, whether I had reason to say, that the *mausoleum* or tomb of *Taje-Mehalle* is something worthy to be admired. For my part, I do not yet well know whether I am not somewhat infected still with *Indianisme*: but I must needs say that I believe it ought to be reckoned amongst the wonders of the world, rather than those unshapen masses of the Egyptian pyramids, which I was weary to see after I had seen them twice, and in which I find nothing *without*, but pieces of great stones ranged in the form of steps one upon another, and *within* nothing but very little art and invention.”

The screen, it will be observed, is not mentioned:

and there can be little doubt but that it was added in Aurangzeb's time, after the body of Shah Jahán had been laid by that of his wife and his cenotaph placed by the side of hers on the upper floor.

Various accounts have been given in explanation of the foundations still apparent on the opposite bank of the river. One story is that a noble wished to build there, but the Government discountenanced the project; the emperor observing: "If his building is very good it will eclipse the Taj; if it is not, the effect of my building will be spoiled." So the work was stopped.

One would not think that the engineers of that day were equal to bridging the river. But the bridge at Jaunpur shows that this would hardly be just. The following remarks are from Tavernier who saw the Taj building—

"I have seen the commencement and the completion of this great work, which employed twenty thousand men daily for twenty-two years, a fact from which some idea of its excessive costliness may be formed. The scaffolding is held to have cost more than the building, for not having [enough] wood they had to make it of brick, as also the centerings of the vaults. Shah Jahán began to make his own sepulchre on the other side of the river; but his war with his son interrupted the design, and Aurangzeb, the present ruler, has not cared to carry it out."

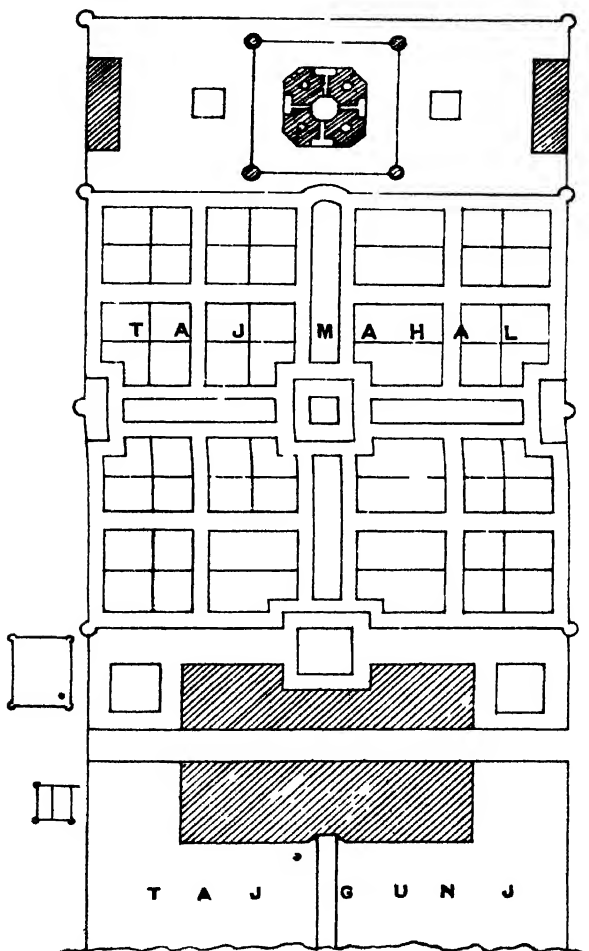
It must therefore be allowed that there is strong corroboration of the prevalent tradition which has asserted that it was the intention of the emperor to build his own monument on the opposite bank and to connect the two tombs by a magnificent bridge. But it is added that his captivity cut short his architectural enterprises, so that, when he died his remains were interred close to those of his beloved in the same monument. "Thus," says Mr. Taylor, "Fate conceded to Love what was denied to Vanity."

The more practical Fergusson shall give us the sober

details and some measurements. The enclosure including garden and outer court is a parallelogram of 1,860 feet by more than 1,000 feet. The outer court, surrounded by arcades and adorned by four gateways, is an oblong, occupying in length the whole breadth of the enclosure, and is about 450 feet deep. The principal gateway leads from this court to the garden, where the tomb is seen framed in an avenue of dark cypress trees. The plinth of white marble is 18 feet high, and is an exact square of 313 feet each way. At the four corners stand four columns or towers, each 137 feet high, and crowned with a little pavilion. The mausoleum itself occupies a space of 186 feet square, in the centre of this larger square, and each of the four corners is cut off opposite each of the towers. The central dome is 50 feet in diameter by 80 feet in height. On the platform in front of the *juwab* or false mosque is a tracing of the topmost spine, a gilded spike crowning the central dome to a height of 30 feet. The interior is lighted from marble-trellised-screen lights above and below.—(*Ferg. Hist. Archit.*, II., 693.)

To the above details it may be added that Shah Jahan himself gives the total height from ground to spire top as 107 yards. The *gaz illâhi*, or "yard of Akhar," is a small fraction less than 33 inches, and this would yield 296 feet as stated in the *Guide to the Taj*. The writer also estimates the height of the minarets at 225 feet. The real heights, for which I am indebted to Lieutenant (now Major) Boughey, R. E., are as follows:—

From garden level to lower platform	...	4	feet.
"	"	plinth (upper ditto)	22½ "
"	"	point of archway	89 "
"	"	top of parapet over	
		ditto	114½ "
"	"	springing of dome	139½ "
"	"	top of ditto (base of	
		metal pinnacle)	213½ "
"	"	summit of pinnacle	243½ "





From garden level to platform at top of  
    minarets ... .. 137 feet.  
   "   summit of metal pin-  
    nacle on ditto ... 162½ "

It may here be noted that visitors will be disappointed with the celebrated echo of this dome if they attempt to play or sing any complicated melodies or roulades in it. The echo is so quick that it catches the notes and runs them into one another, so as to produce a most distressing discord, unless the notes chosen be such as form a natural harmony. The chord of the seventh produces a very beautiful effect. It is this that, in the words of the American traveller, "floats and soars overhead in a long, delicious undulation, fading away so slowly that you hear it after it is silent, as you see, or seem to see, a lark you have been watching after it is swallowed up in the blue vault of heaven."

"On the one side of the Taj is a mosque with three domes of red sandstone,\* covered with mosaic of white marble. Now on the opposite side there is a building precisely similar, but of no use whatever," except as a proof of the extreme sense of balance and symmetry which actuated the whole design. "This building," as Mr. Bayard Taylor continues, "is marked by the feeling for proportion which prevailed in these days—and proportion is art. In comparing these masterpieces of architecture with Moorish remains in Spain, which resemble them most nearly, I have been struck with the singular fact, that while at the central seats of the Moslem empire, art reached but a comparative degree of development, here and there on the opposite and most distant frontiers, it attained a rapid and splendid culmination."

The false mosque is as fine as the true. It has been hitherto appropriated to the use of travellers and parties

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\* This is a mistake; the domes are all of white marble—the basements of the building only are of red stone.

of pleasure ; and it is this no doubt that has given rise to the oft-reported story of "wassail and riot" desecrating the place of worship of departed kings. Let it be said, once for all, that this is not, never was, never could be, a "place of worship." It would be certainly more in character if no festivities had ever disturbed the repose of a place set aside for solemn memories ; but as long as the natives hold constant fairs in the enclosure and throw orange-peel and other *débris* about the whole place, it is perhaps somewhat hypercritical to object to a few Englishmen refreshing themselves, within the limits of becoming mirth, in a remote corner used for no other purpose. It is hardly necessary to say that the true mosque was never desecrated. This building is on the left of the Taj, and its *mihrab* or recess pointing towards the Kaaba at once distinguishes it from the counterbalancing building on the other side. It is in a *parterre* beneath this mosque that the enclosure is shown where the remains of the empress rested while the Taj was being built. A recent Indian journalist has well said—

"The æthereal beauty which undoubtedly characterises the group as a whole is entirely due to material and to colour. The materials and colours are thoroughly adapted to the climate, and would lose their effect in another atmosphere, or if backed by dull leaden skies. To my mind the Taj is utterly unsuited for illumination. To crowd the silent gardens with gaping chattering crowds, to deck the great doorway and the mosque with rows of light till they resemble gin-palaces, to fling lime-light upon the delicate masonry of the mausoleum, seems to me an act of vandalism. Such things befit a Crystal Palace, where the whole surroundings are rococo, flimsy, artificial, and theatrical ; but they are out of keeping with a building in which the dead rest, and in which the stern simplicity of art is the predominant feature."

†.

Such as the place is, it is appreciated by the people

of the country far and near. As much admired by the Natives as by Europeans, the Taj and its garden furnish a proof that, like a touch of nature, an appeal of true art also can make the whole world kin. On Sundays and holidays the place is much frequented; and it is good to notice the orderly conduct of the crowds that are collected strolling through the grounds, or treading bare-foot the gleaming precincts.

In a moment the sun has set, and the concourse has dispersed as if by magic. Swift falls the sudden evening, and the mild light of the moon is substituted for the dusty glare of the past hour. If Melrose should be seen by moonlight, surely still more is that effect wanting to complete the beauty of the Taj. The heavy shadows of the foliage, the deep *chiaroscuro* of the embayed portals, the soft curve of the dome, all serve to enhance the virginal splendour of the material of the cupolus and minarets till they appear almost transparent. The repose is unbroken except by a light breeze in the tree-tops; the blue sky is without a cloud; and the rare genius of the calm building finds its way unchallenged to the heart.

### TOMBS, &c., ACROSS THE RIVER.

RETURNING towards Agra (City or Civil Lines) along the strand, a fine view is obtained of the river front of the palace; and the visitor may then cross the pontoon bridge, and turning to the left, he will proceed up the left bank of the river and shortly reach the **Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah**. This is the Persian adventurer from Teheran already mentioned by his name of Ghaias-ud-Din, as the father of Nur Jahán, and of her brother called Asaf Khan, whose daughter was Mumtaz Muhul, the lady of the Taj. He himself was Vazir in the time of his son-in-law, the Emperor Jahángir, and died at Kangra on the way to Kashmir in 1621-22.



His son was appointed to his vacant office by the title of Asaf Khān.

Professor Blochmann gives his character in the following terms :—

“Ghias Beg was a poet. He imitated the old classics, which ruling passion showed itself a few hours before he died . . . . Jahangir praises him for his social qualities and says that his society was better than [exhilarating drugs]. He was generally liked, had no enemies, and was never seen angry . . . . He was never idle ; his official accounts were always in the greatest order.” [So far good, but mark the end !] “He liked bribes and showed much boldness in demanding them.” The instance of the ruling passion above alluded to is taken from the memoirs of his royal master and son-in-law. When the old man lay dying, the emperor came in and Nur Jahān asked her father if he recognized His Majesty. The dying minister replied by a quotation from a Persian poet, meaning :—

“Even if the mother-blindman happened to be present now,  
He himself would surely know thee by the splendour of thy brow.”

The garden is well kept, and stocked with flowers, shrubs, and cypress trees. The lower hall containing the tomb of the Vazir and his wife, is a parallelogram of marble coarsely inlaid with coloured stones, chiefly in arabesque, with a few large flowers. It stands on a sandstone terrace, 149 feet square and 3·4 feet from the ground. Four bold kiosques stand at the four corners, and in the centre is a small pavilion of rich pierced-work covered with an oblong dome topped with two light pinnacles : here are also cenotaphs, but without inscriptions.

The roof of the basement upon which this dome stands is 69 feet square ; the hall containing the real tombs is 22 feet 3 inches square, and the inscriptions in the Toghra character are taken from the Koran, Suras *Fattahna* and *Mohzammlī*, and (above) from the Sura *Tabaruk-ul-Lāzī*.

The tomb was completed by the Vazir's imperial daughter in the year 1628.

It is said that the empress at first intended that the monument she raised to her father should be of silver, but she was dissuaded by her architect, who advised her to use some material which, being less likely to excite the cupidity of beholders, would have a better chance of remaining unmolested. Itmád-ud Daulah died in A.D. 1622, but the place had perhaps been a garden-house of his previously. It is believed that the building, as we now see it, was built by his imperial daughter ; and it is not only beautiful, but has a special interest as being the only work of the period known to exist in these parts. It accords with her character that the empress at first proposed to build her father's monument of silver, but was persuaded to adopt a less costly and *less portable* material. The emperor was at this time, and for some years later, involved in serious troubles and a constant victim to attacks of asthma. He died in 1627, and the empress losing her connection with public affairs, had time to devote herself to art and religion. She enjoyed a stipend nominally equal to £20,000 a year, and really worth at that time a great deal more. Besides the tomb of her father at Agra, Nur Jahán built the fine tombs of her husband and herself, which are still to be seen at Lahore.\*

\* The following account of the spot may be perused :—The emperor's tomb is well known for its size and magnificence, in which it rivals the similar edifices of Delhi and Agra. It stands in a large but dilapidated garden, part of the high enclosure wall of which has been washed away by encroachments of the Ravee. The tomb of Asaf Khan stands in a similar garden in line with the emperor's, but separated from it by an immense serai—a solitary monument of the grand imperial road that marked by koseminars and public caravanserais, once ran from Delhi to Kotas. The serai is still splendid with its noble and richly decorated gateways, in which marble and red sandstone, brought all the way from Agra, are lavishly used, but its court is now intersected by railway sidings and occupied by material and workshops. The tomb of Asaf Khan is of the usual shape—octagonal, with a bulb dome—but is well known, even at Lahore (where the tile work on ancient

The new emperor, it will be remembered, was not her son. She had a daughter by her first husband, but bore no children to Jahángír. Her daughter's husband was her stepson, Shuhryar, son of Jahángír, by a Hindu princess. On his father's demise, he attempted to seize the throne, but was taken prisoner and put to death by Shah Jahán along with other members of the family.

The next tomb on the riverside is the **Chini-ka-Roza**, but as it is not very accessible from the road, the traveller will do well to leave it for the present. The Jahánura, or Zuhara garden, between the *Chini-ka-Roza* and Ram Bagh, is thought to have been a garden of Babar's. The buildings it contains are of the transition style between the 3rd Pathan and 1st Moghul.

We shall conduct the visitor next to the **Ram Bagh**. Whether this name was indicative of a dedication to the Hindu demi-god Rama, or whether the name is a corruption from a Persian word *Aram Bag* (the garden of repose), is a disputed point among local antiquaries. The first notice that we have of it is as the temporary resting-place of the body of Emperor Babar, the founder of the Moghul dynasty (so called), who were in reality a mixed Turkish race descended from Timur the Lame, or Tamerlane. As it is believed that Babar lived in an old fort on the same side of the river opposite the Taj, it is extremely probable that the jovial hero, we are told, when he had a mind to be merry, was wont to fill a fountain with wine and join gaily in open-air revels with companions of both sexes. We may imagine this garden having been the scene of some of these Tartar picnics.

In the later days the Ram Bagh became the jointure house of the Empress Nur Jahán, and was known by her other name as the "garden of Nur Afshan." It continued to be kept up as an orchard and pleasure-

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buildings is so common and excellent), for the beautiful glazed tiles which decorate its exterior.

In Jahángír's reign Itmád-ud-Daulah with his son and daughter gave much countenance and assistance to Roe's embassy.

ground by all succeeding governments, and it is said that the name of Ram Bagh was first conferred upon it by the Mahratta administration in the last century. This goes far to discredit the suggested etymology of *Aram Bagh*, Ram being a favourite hero with the Hindus whose name was not unlikely to be borrowed by the Mahrattas in designating a place that they were fond of. There is little of interest in the buildings, which consist of subterranean vaults looking out upon the river, and two houses that have been modernized and fitted with glazed doors and furniture. The garden is extensive and well kept, and the place forms a pleasant retreat for Europeans during the fierce heats of the Agra summer.

Professor Blochmann informs us (*Ain*, p. 509) that Nur Jahán was originally named Mihr-oon-Nissa, "Darling of the Sex" or "Sun of Women," as the Professor interprets it. She was born in 984 H., and must therefore have been 34 when the emperor married her; which looks as if her influence over him was not based upon mere passion . . . The emperor said, "Before I married her I never knew what marriage really meant." She enjoyed the state of a queen-regnant rather than of a mere consort. She was the especial patroness of orphan-girls, and is said to have married no less than 500 with portions from her own funds. She possessed much taste in furniture and entertainments, and designed many new patterns for jewellery.

Taking boat at the foot of the Ram Bagh stairs, a pleasant little voyage may be had down stream, to the bridge-of-boats, when a carriage should be in readiness on the city side—the right bank of the river.

Dropping down with the stream, the visitor will pass the remains of the *Zuhara* (? "Jahánura") garden and its dependent wells and pleasure-houses on the left shore. It will not, however, be worth his while to land till he reaches the **Chini-ka-Roza**.

This ruin is quadrangular with the remains of projecting entrances so large as almost to constitute tran-

septs. It is believed to be the monument of Afzul Khan, a literary adventurer of the 17th century. He was a native of Shiraz, originally named Shukrulla, who came by way of Surat to Burhanpur, where he entered the service of Jahángir about the year A. D. 1617. He subsequently became *dewan* (Financial Minister) to Shah Jahán, and died at Lahore A.D. 1639, about the time of the building of that Emperor's Palace at New Delhi. The tomb is now principally remarkable for the beautiful patterns of the plaster coloured like porcelain by which—beyond the reach of human hands—it is still covered, and from which it derives its name of "China-tomb." Inscriptions from the Koran may still be traced on parts of the building, but are rapidly perishing. The ornamentation is a sort of coarse enamelling (probably in shellac) on the plaster. The dome is rather in the old Pathan style than in the more rotund style that was fashionable at the time of its construction.

This was the date of the commencement of Jahán-ura's Mosque—the Agra *Jamma Musjid*—and the bulbous dome was only just coming into fashion. The Taj (1630-48) was perhaps the first conspicuous instance of its adoption. Afzul Khan was probably an old fashioned gentleman who built his tomb in his lifetime, and according to the ideas of his youth. At all events this building and the Kula (or Kallan) Musjid are genuine, though late products of the Pathan school. So also the tomb of Adham Khan near the Kutub at Delhi.

The visitor now returns to Agra by the roads leading from the bridge-of-boats, passing by the old custom-house, a Moghul villa, now much defaced by British improvements. Going on through a suburb, the first turn to the right takes him to the Catholic Mission and Cathedral already referred to, in regard to which the remarks of Bernier may here, with propriety, be transcribed :—

#### CATHOLIC MISSION BUILDINGS.

"In Agra, the Reverend Fathers, the Jesuits, have a

Church and a College, where in private they teach the children of some twenty-five or thirty Christian families that have (I know not how) gathered and settled themselves there by the charity of those Fathers, the Christian Doctrine. It was *Akbar* who (in the time of the great power of the *Portugueze* in the Indies) called them, and gave them a pension for their subsistence, permitting them to build churches in the capital cities of *Agra* and *Lahore*, and his son *Jehan Guire* favored them yet more. But *Chah Jehan*, son of *Jehan Guire*, and father of *Aurangzeb*, now reigning, took from them their pension, caused their church at *Lahore* to be pulled down, and the greatest part of that in *Agra*, overthrowing also the steeple of the Church, wherein that bell was that could be heard over all the town.

"These Fathers, the Jesuits, entertained great hopes of the progress of Christianity in the time of King *Jehan Guire*, because of his contempt of the *Mohumetan* law, and the esteem he professed to the *Christian*, even giving way to two of his nephews to embrace the Christian religion, and to a certain *Mirza-zul-Kirnain* (that had been bred in the seraglio and was circumcised) to turn Christian too, under the pretence that he was born of Christian parents, and son of the wife of a rich *Armenian* which *Jehan Guire* had caused to be brought to him into the seraglio.

"The same Fathers say that this king, to begin in good earnest to countenance the Christian religion, designed to put the whole court into the habit of the *Franqui*, and that after he had prepared all things for it, and even dressed himself in that fashion, he called to him one of the chief omrahs, asking his opinion of this dress ; but that this omrah altogether surprised at it, having answered him every seriously that it was a very dangerous thing, he thought himself obliged to change his mind, and turned all into raillery." The conduct of the Japanese in recent times shows of what an Asiatic Government may be capable.

"These Fathers affirm further, that he being upon the point of death, commanded that they should be called to make him a Christian, but that then they were not made acquainted with it. Many say that this is not so, and that he died as he had lived without any religion, and in the design he had, as well as his father *Akbar*, to set himself up for a prophet, and to become the head of a particular religion of his own composure. However it be, there is another thing I have learned of a Mohumetan, that was son to an officer of *Jehan Guire*, namely, that this king being one day in a debauché, called to him a certain religious man of Florence, whom he called Father *Atech*, as being a little fiery man; and after he had commanded him to say all he could *against* the law of Mohumet, and *for* the law of Christ, in the presence of many knowing *Mullahs*, he would have made this terrible trial of both those laws, viz., that a great pit should be made, and a good fire in it, and that Father *Atech* with the *Gospel* under his arm, and one of those *Mullahs* with the *Alcoran* under his, should cast themselves both together into that fire, and that he would embrace the law of him that should not burn. But that the sad countenance of the *Mullahs*, altogether astonished, and the compassion he had of the *Florentine* Father, who accepted the condition, diverted him from it. Whatever the truth be of this story, 'tis certain that while *Jehan Guire* lived, these Fathers were respected and honoured in this court, and that they conceived great hopes of the advancement of Christianity in those parts; but that since that time they have had no great cause to hope much of it, except perhaps what they received by that familiarity, which our Father *Buze* had with *Dāra*."

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## SIKANDRA.

THE road by which the old Moghuls used to go northward to Lahore and Kashmir passes north-west by an arch of red stone and a bastion, the remains of the outer walls of the *enceinte*. This road may be called the "Appian way" of Agra, being bordered by tombs on either side. After passing the old Delhi Gate of the imperial walls, the traveller has on the one hand the District Jail, on the other the Lunatic Asylum, both on the sites of old monuments of which nothing is now known. To the right, between the road and the river, will be found the buildings mentioned at p. 49, which, together with the tomb of Mariam Zamani, may be safely reckoned to be among the oldest buildings in the neighbourhood. In nearing Sikandra will be observed a handsome gateway of carved stone in the modern Hindu style, leading to an enclosure, in which is a very beautiful carved sandstone building of the time of Jahángír in good preservation. About five miles from Agra, at the tomb of the Emperor Akbar, a very beautiful gateway opens into a garden, at the end of which is a building of four storeys, the upper chamber being of white marble with lattice windows, and crowned by four small kiosques. It was not completed during the emperor's lifetime, the inscription setting forth that it was erected in the reign of his son and successor. Moreover, Jahángír states in his memoirs that, in the third year of his reign (A.D. 1608), he saw the works and was so dissatisfied that he caused them to be demolished and reconstructed at a cost of fifteen lakhs of rupees. This mark of consideration for an indulgent father's memory is a pleasing trait in a character where such are somewhat deficient.

This is Finch's report (about the same date): "Nothing more finished yet, after ten years' work." "This tomb," he adds, "is much worshipped both by *Moors* and *Gentiles*, holding him for a great saint." Hawkins,



who was at Agra about the same time as Finch, thought still less hopefully of the progress of this work. "It hath," says the Captain, "been fourteen years building, and it is thought will not be finished these fourteen years more. The least that works there daily are three thousand people; but this much I will say that one of our workmen will despatch more than three of them."

There may have been buildings here before the old emperor's death, but it cannot be doubted that the work, as we see it, is the work of Jahángir.\*

The white marble enclosure atop rests upon four stages, inclusive of the platform, the height of the whole from the ground being over 74 feet. The inscriptions upon the architraves of the interior are from a Persian poem supposed to have been composed by Shekh Faizi, the brother of Abul. Fazl, on the virtues of his old patron the Emperor Akbar; and the head and foot of the marble tombstone contain the salutations of his faith or school, "Allaho Akbar! Jilli Julali Hoo!"† Ninety-nine titles of the creator are said to be inscribed about it.

Finch says that at his last sight of this monument there was a rich tent or awning over the upper tomb; and the stanchion for such a roofing appear still as an integral portion of the cornices of the surrounding cloisters. He adds, that "it was to be inarched over with the most curious white and speckled marble, to be ceiled all within with pure sheet gold, richly inwrought." No traces of any preparation for such covering can now be observed; nor is it easy to understand how it could have been supported. It is said that the sort of half pillar at the head was intended to bear the *Koh-i-Nur* diamond, and that it stood there for some time.

\* In the *Shahjahan Nama* it is said to have been twenty years in building.

† Also containing the name of the deceased "Julal-ud-din Akbar."

On the frieze round the great gateway are other poetical inscriptions in the Persian language setting forth the praises of the monarch and the mausoleum. The name of the Emperor Jahángír is given as that of the founder; and it is stated that the work was completed in the seventh year of his reign, corresponding to 1613 A.D. In the corresponding part of the garden-front the poetry is continued, and each ends with the name of the engraver *Abdul Huq Shirazi* (native of Shiraz) with the date corresponding to 1614. On this side the monarch praised is the son and founder Jahán-gír, as the verses upon the other or road-front are dedicated to the father, whose remains are interred within.

The real tomb is in a vault below the floor of the building, and the ground level into which one descends as into an Egyptian pyramid. The vaulted vestibule was covered with moulded plaister, still coloured, chiefly with dark blue and gold. The mortuary hall is nearly 38 feet square, and is surrounded by other chambers of smaller size containing tombs of less distinguished members of the imperial family.

Round the sepulchre were originally placed the armour, raiment, and books of the Great Emperor, ready to his hand if he should rise. But the Jâts are said to have carried them off in the last century to *Bhurt-pur*, where it is possible that some relics of Akbar still survive in oblivion or concealment. The tomb has been lately provided with a sumptuous covering at the expense of Lord Northbrook.

The platform, on the open storey at the top, upon which rests the carved cenotaph, corresponds in size to the sepulchral chamber on the ground; and it must have been this, if anything, that Finch was given to understand was to have been covered with an arch and vault. The surrounding cloisters contain a quadrangle of 70 feet square. It would have been next to impossible either to roof this space under existing conditions or even to have introduced a domed vault in the middle.

It is curious that Mr. Taylor, generally an acute describer, fell into the same error. He says (while strangely enough admitting that "the summit of the mausoleum is open to the sky") that the cenotaph stands "under a pavilion of marble covered with a gilded dome."

The outer walls of the cloisters of this upper square are formed of marble screens pierced with a number of intricate and highly varied geometric patterns. Through occasional apertures that have been left for the purpose, a fine view presents itself of the gardens and the surrounding country. The white dome of the Taj rests on the eastern horizon like a rising moon. Mr. Taylor, in speaking of this very beautiful scene, says—"I thought the Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Grenada had already presented me with the purest type of Saracenic, but I was mistaken. What I had seen of the splendours of the Moghuls, and what I then saw, overpowered me like a magnificent dream."

The American author before quoted, describing Sikandra, says:—"It takes its name from Alexander,\* whose invasion of India has thus been commemorated by the Moghuls. The great Macedonian, however, did not penetrate so far as this, his battle with Porus having been fought on the Jhelum, or Hydaspes, beyond Lahore. The tomb of Akbar stands in the midst of a large square garden, which has a lofty gateway of red sandstone in the centre of each of its sides. From these four gateways, which are upwards of seventy feet high, four grand causeways, of hewn stone, converge to the central platform, on which the mausoleum stands. The intermediate spaces are filled with orange, mango, banana, palm, and peepul trees. In the centre of the causeways are immense tanks and fountains. The platform of white stone, which terminates these magnificent approaches, is about four hundred feet square. The

\* In all probability from Sikandar Lodi, who died A.H. 915, and is said to have had a villa here.

mausoleum, which is square, measures more than three hundred feet of a side, and rises in five terraces, in a pyramidal form, to the height of one hundred feet. Around each of the terraces runs an arched gallery surmounted by rows of cupolas, resting on circles of small pillars. The material of the edifice is red sandstone, except the upper storey, which is of white marble.

"A long descending passage leads from the main entrance to a vaulted hall in the centre of the structure; light is admitted through a few small openings in the dome, barely sufficient to show you a plain tomb in the form of a sarcophagus, with a wreath of fresh flowers lying on it. Beneath it is the dust of Akbar, one of the greatest men who ever wielded a sceptre, the fourth descendant in a direct line from Tamerlane, the grandson of Baber the Conqueror, and grandfather of Shah Juhan; in him culminated the wisdom, the power, and the glory of that illustrious line. I doubt if the annals of any family that ever reigned can furnish six successive monarchs comparable in greatness of their endowments, and splendour of their rule, to Baber, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Juhan, and Aurangzeb."

The minarets on each side the main entrance of the Sikandra Bagh have had their tops knocked off; the natives say by order of Lord Lake when he took Agra in 1803, because some European soldiers fell from the top of them. Another and more probable story is that the Jâts, when they sacked Agra, from mere wantonness, turned their cannon upon these elegant turrets.

These minarets seem to have been much in their present state long before Lake's time. Mr. Hughes, R.A., an artist, who saw them in 1782-83, records that at that period the tops had disappeared—

"At each angle of the gate are minarets of white marble rising up to a great height, in part fluted-in. These minarets were formerly covered with open pavilions, and furnished with domes, which have long since been destroyed." [*Travels in India*, 1780-83, p. 121.]

A little further down the Muttra Road, on the opposite side of the way, is the tomb said to be the monument of the Christian wife of the Emperor Akbar. As will be shown more at length in the account of Fatthepur-Sikri, there is very grave reason to doubt whether Akbar ever had a Christian wife, and therefore whether her supposed influence on behalf of the Jesuits is not a mere myth. The building has for some time been used as a printing-press connected with a Protestant Orphanage, of which the Church stands hard by. The probability is that this lady was a Hindu—daughter of Rajah Buhura Mul of Jaipur—whose title, *Mariam Zumani* (Mary of the period) has led to the myth. She was mother to the Emperor Jahángir, and died at Agra A.H. 1032, in the eighteenth year of her son's reign.

The building probably made part of the country-house of the Lodi dynasty overthrown by Babar.

## TOMBS, &c., IN CITY AND SUBURBS

RETURNING from Sikandra the visitor will not fail to notice the milestones (*kos-minar*), somewhat resembling in shape and size the *meta sudans* that stands in front of the Coliseum at Rome. The *kos* (Pers., *kroh*) is a measure of distance stated in Elliot's Glossary to be equal to 2 miles 4 furlongs and 158 yards. These pillars marked the distances on the imperial way from Agra to Lahore, and were built by the Emperor Jahángir along the royal road. Some are by the side of the modern causeway, some in the fields where the old line has been deserted. A well with stone seats for the accommodation of travellers used to exist at each of these stages. The Guru-ka-Tal and mausoleum, supposed of Sikandar Lodi, can be visited from Sikandra. The tomb of Mariam is thought to have been part of Sikandar's Palace. Buildings of the Lodi time are scarce.

To the left of the road, about half-way between Sikandra and Agra, will be found some tombs in the fields : one with an adjacent hall of sixty-four pillars ; the other a domed building with a crypt, now without monument or inscription. The former is believed to be a memorial of Bakhshi Salubar Khan, killed by Amar Singh, *Ruthor* (vide *sup.*, p. 21) ; the latter is asserted to mark the last resting-place of one of Akbar's peers, named Sadiq Khan. He was a "*Munsubdar* of 4,000" in the technical language of the time. He died in 1597, and is supposed by some to be buried at Dholpur, where he erected a mausoleum in his lifetime.\* He was the nephew of our old friend Itmád-ud-Daulah, whose daughter was the celebrated Nur Jahán Begam, so often mentioned in these pages. He married another of the daughters, who died 7th October 1630. He was one of Akbar's best officers.

Proceeding a little further in the same direction, a little nearer to the civil station, one comes upon a large *baoli* in front of a gateway. These *baolis*, of which there are many about Agra and Delhi, were places in which the richer residents used to build rooms round the shaft of a large well ; these being reached by broad and deep staircases, afforded a pleasant retreat in very hot weather. Over the gate of the enclosure is an Arabic inscription with a chronogram which has not been deciphered. Entering, the visitor finds a garden with a raised platform in the middle, crowned with an elegant pavilion on light arches. This building was erected about fourteen years ago by the Seths of Muttra (to whom the place now belongs) in the room of a bath or cistern that formerly occupied the mound. In the centre of this bath was a tomb, in which lay the remains of the *Ladli Begam*. This lady was sister to Akbar's famous friend and Councillor Abul Fazl, the author of

\* *Vide* Trans. Arch. Soc. Agra, June 1875, where the inscription on the Dholpur tomb is given, dated 1005 H.

the *Ain Akbari*. She was the wife of Islam Khan, the grandson of Shekh Sulim Chishti of Fattehpur, who was Governor of Bengal under Jahángír. The Begam died in A.D. 1608. Her husband is buried at Fattehpur, in the Durgah Court. His tomb is an enormous, but not otherwise striking, building on the opposite side of the quadrangle to the tomb of the saint.

Another tomb, about a quarter of a mile to the north of the courts on the *Poia Ghât* Road, is that of another holy man, martyred under Jahángír. This was Nur-ullah Khan, a *Shiah* of good position, who claimed to be descended from Hosen, the grandson of the Prophet; he came from a village in Persia called Shustar, from which causes he is named in the epitaph "Hoseni Shus-tri." He was author of several religious books.

Across the road is the *karbela*, where the martyrdom of Hassan and Hosen, the Prophet's grandsons, is celebrated at the Moharram; and close by is a cemetery of the *Sunni* sect, in which the oldest tomb is that of Abul Ala, a Moghul nobleman, who retired from the world in the reign of Jahángír, and died at Agra A.D. 1651. His memory is still much revered by his co-religionists. The tomb is kept covered with a handsome cloth; people assemble every Thursday to sing hymns there, and a yearly fair is held, where alms are distributed to the poor.

In the city there are a few interesting remains; for the most part, however, these are but little accessible to European visitors. Near the Government dispensary will be found a large mosque called the *Kali Musjid*,\* or "Black Mosque," which is worth a visit, as answering much more to Fergusson's description (*Hist. Archit.* II, 688), than the *Jamma Musjid* in regard to which it is given in the original. The mosque is of the earliest style of Hindustani art (*vide* App. A), approaching the

\* Probably the correct name is *Kullan* "Great" *Musjid*, as in the case of the similarly named building at Delhi.

"Pathan," and is a fine, though somewhat ruinous, specimen of the transitional period of Akbar. It is traditionally ascribed to Mozufur Hosen, a grandson of Ismail Shah Suffavi, King of Persia, and father of the wife of Shah Jahán buried in the *Kunduhari Bagh*, now the town residence of His Highness the Maharajah of Bhurtpoor. Mozufur was a "Grandee of Five Thousand." His character was tricky and wavering, and he died a disappointed man, in A.D. 1600, about five years before the Emperor Akbar.

In the *Nai-ki-Mundi*, near the Collector's office, is an ancient mosque, whose three plain domes, exactly representing the curve of the vault within, bespeak the influence of Pathan art before the adoption of Tartar forms (*vide* App. A). There are no inscriptions or any authentic record to show the exact date of this building.

Not far off is the shrine of Shah Ala-ud-din Mujzub, commonly called Alawul Bulawul, son of Syud Suliman of Medina, who came to India, *viâ* Khorasan, in the time of Sher Shah, the interrex of Humáyun. He established a school of Mahomedan law at Agra, and built the mosque which is still in existence, the oldest building of the kind in the neighbourhood. He also established a sort of monastery, and some endowments still kept up givesupport to a shadow of the ancient establishment. The most curious thing about the mosque is that it has sunk into the ground up to the spring of the central arch, a circumstance which is thus explained by tradition. Sher Shah, it is said, wished to use the sacred edifice as a stable, and the saint demurring cursed the building, which thereupon descended as if to hide itself. The monarch soon after of course died.

The holy man himself did not consent to pay the debt of nature till the next reign, dying at Agra (*temp.* Sulim Shah) in A.D. 1546, at the mature age of 90. There is an old *hummam*, or Turkish-bath, in Chipitola, dated A.H. 1030.

The city walls have been entirely surveyed and mea-



sured by Mr. Carlleyle, and found to have been ten miles in length (in round figures). Besides the Delhi Gate, on the way to Sikandra, mention should be made of the gate to the southward and long parapetted causeway called *Chunga Modi Pul*. There was till lately a third gate (nearly opposite the shop of Pura Ram, the lapidary), but it was removed to make way for the traffic to the Exhibition of 1866. It was called the Ajmere Gate. An old praying place, still standing at the road-side, shows where this gate stood. There is let into the back wall a stone inscription of the time of Jahángír, which formerly belonged to the now vanished mosque of the *Mujdi-la-Gumbuz* Cemetery hard by.

Firoz Khan's tomb is not far from the *Dahara Bagh*, to the south of cantonments, opposite the third milestone on the Gwalior Road. It is one of the most beautiful buildings in the neighbourhood, and of an early style. It displays an abundance of glazed tiles of various colours, together with carvings of animals in the style often used in Akbar's time. In front has been a fine masonry tank, now much injured by the removal of the stones that held up the banks.

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### FATTEHPUR-SIKRI.

THE road to Fattehpur-Sikri leaves the Drummond Road of Agra opposite the Nai-ki-Mundi, and goes to the west through Sháh Gúnj. Just at the entrance to the Sháh Gúnj Road are the remains of an old mosque with an inscription still very legible, setting forth that it was built by Jahángír in 1031 H. This was the 16th year of the emperor's reign, and just before his final departure from Agra.\* About a quarter of a mile

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\* This spot marks the site of the old "Ajmere Gate" of the outer walls.

further on the road turns off to the left, towards the lines of the British Infantry. A little way up this road is a considerable Mahomedan Cemetery called *Mujdi-ka-Gumbuz*. Here is what some suppose to be the tomb of Mirza Hindal, son of Babar, and father of Akbar's chief queen *Sultana Rogia*. The name, nearly obliterated, is still to be seen on the top of the tombstone, which is surrounded by Arabic inscriptions in the Toghra character. At the head and foot stand monoliths about seven feet high, richly carved, and the footstone bears a Persian epitaph and the date 978 H. Akbar was at this time engaged in a serious campaign against the Rajputs, and this may perhaps account for the small scale of the monument. It is, however, a fine specimen of sandstone carving, and the remains of the plinth serve to show that it was once a monument of importance. It is generally asserted, on the other hand, that Mirza Hindal was buried at Kabul in A.H. 958.

Proceeding in a westerly direction the traveller next comes to the village of Socheta, where was fought during the Mutiny a very severe action between the British garrison of Agra and a party of the rebels. The following is an abstract of the official narrative, under date July 5th, 1857. The writer, Mr. A. March-Phillipps, was himself a distinguished member of the mounted volunteers on that trying day :—

“The force moved on the road to Fattehpur-Sikri till they arrived at the Begam Sumroo's walled gardens; then they left the road and formed in order, moving to the right over sandy plains. The enemy were then in sight, and soon opened fire from guns planted directly in our front. Our force advancing opened fire, and the enemy, after a short exchange of shots, retired to the distance of two miles, to the village of Sucheyta, when the firing recommenced; then the 3rd Europeans were ordered to lie down behind a slightly rising ground, which did not however protect them from the fire of the rifle company of the 72nd posted on the tops of houses and in trees.

In this position the 3rd remained, and numbers were thus killed by this concealed and destructive fire.

"The three guns commanded by Captain Pearson took ground on the left, while Captain D'Oyley commanded on the right; nineteen of the volunteer cavalry covered the flanks of the right, and twenty of the same with the mounted officers, the left.

"The artillery of the enemy was also divided to meet the two fires. Their guns were screened by rising ground forming natural breastworks, and by thickly growing trees. Their infantry at first were posted behind the villages, while their cavalry, in great force, formed behind and on our right flank.

"Owing to the position of the guns of the enemy, our artillery could do little but fire into the village and the grove of trees. Their infantry, emboldened by impunity, advanced and occupied the village; their artillery which had first fired high acquired the exact range; two tumbrils on our left half-battery were exploded. On this a cloud of sowars poured with yells from behind the village, and made a resolute attempt to charge the hampered guns; they were met by a discharge of grape and a volley from a company of the 3rd, and retired in confusion.

"Soon a sowar, whose red *chupkan* marked him as one of the Kotah Contingent, approached the right half-battery at a hand gallop, and halted at the distance of 200 yards from the front of the handful of volunteer cavalry. Having satisfied himself as to their number, he turned his horse and galloped away; now the enemy's cavalry was observed to form on our right, and advanced with the evident intention of charging the half-battery. Their number could not have been less than 200. Major Prendergast, who commanded the eighteen volunteer cavalry on the right, ordered an advance, which accelerated to a charge brought this small number soon into the midst of a crowd of the rebel horsemen; the ranks of the volunteers were broken by the impetuosity with

which they advanced ; the enemy closed round, and but for their remarkable cowardice, not one of the eighteen could have returned ; as it was, six were killed, one desperately and five slightly wounded ; the remainder formed again as before.

"The word was at last given for the Europeans to advance, and they occupied the village with complete success ; had this order been given earlier in the action, who can say how much slaughter might have been spared ? For now it was discovered that the artillery ammunition was exhausted, and nothing remained but to retire into the fort. Fortunately the enemy were as ill-provided as ourselves, for though their guns opened on our retreating forces, they did not follow to any distance ; the last discharge unfortunately killed three men in the 3rd Europeans.

"The entire loss on our side was 41 killed and 99 wounded.

"On the approach of the retiring force to cantonments they were met by the foot militia, who formed across the road, and exchanged shots with the pursuing sowars, by which fire some loss was sustained.

"Before the English troops had reached the fort, the Normal School for native education was in flames, the first of the holocaust ; Mr. Drummond's bungalow was the next ; but the rebel troops did not follow the retreating British force beyond Sháh Gúnj ; indeed, properly speaking, there was no pursuit at all."

It would be out of place to comment here upon this sad business, which seems indeed to have been no more than an exhibition on a small scale of the mingled unreadiness in council and gallantry in action that have so often been characteristic of the race.

The "gardens of the Begam Sumroo," spoken of by Mr. Phillipps, are enclosures that formerly belonged, not to the Begam (who never lived at Agra), but to her infamous husband Walter Reinhardt, who held a command in the time of Nujuf Khan, and died there in

1778. Close by is the tomb of Jahángir's wife, the Jodh-Bai, or Princess of Jodhpur. She was buried here in a masonry tomb by her son the sumptuous Shah Jahán, in or about the 14th year of Jahángir's reign; but the tomb has long been demolished, and little remains but the traces of the enclosure and central vault. Akbar's sister, Dahara Begam, also had a garden near.

Soon after this the road to Fattehpur-Sikri crosses the State Railway to Jaipur, and after that there is nothing worthy the attention of the traveller. He is pursuing a line of road identical in most parts with the old imperial line, and some irrigation works of old days are the only relics to be seen, now on one side and now on the other, crossed by quaint old hog-backed bridges built of small bricks.

At the 22nd milestone the enclosure and towers of the deserted palace become visible, crowned by the lofty top of the *Bolund Darwaza*. The roads here part, one going to that gate, another heavier and steeper, but much more direct, going past the Mint into the heart of the ruins. The latter is the more direct, and we shall here suppose the visitor to be taking it while we turn his attention for a few moments to the earliest European descriptions of the palace. Finch, in the early part of the reign of Jahángir, visited Fattehpur and found it almost in a more deserted state than now: "ruinate, lying like a waste desert, and very dangerous to pass through in the night." The mosque he calls "the goodliest of the East." He adds, that Akbar left the place before it was well finished, driven away by the badness of the water; "so that this goodly city was shortlived, in fifty years being built and ruined."

See also this description in De Laet, who probably had Finch's narrative before him among other materials:

"It was formerly a most noble city; Achabar surrounded it with a wall and fixed here the seat of his Government, which he afterwards transferred to Agra. The wall remains to the present day, but the city is

almost destroyed ; its houses tumbled down, and the soil turned into fields and gardens, so that, when you are in the midst of the city, you would think yourself in the country rather than in a town; the distance from one gate of the city to the other is three English miles ; but it is very dangerous to attempt this journey by night. The suburbs also formerly was most extensive, but are now altogether in ruins. Within the gate on the north side is a very large market-place, a mile in length, paved with flints, and enclosed on either side by buildings. At the end of this there is the royal palace, adorned with many costly edifices, and above it is a mosque, more splendid than any other in the whole East. The ascent to this mosque is by twenty-five or thirty steps, at the top of which is a very lofty and most beautiful gate, visible from a great distance. Within is a broad area, paved with living stone, and surrounded on all sides by magazines, with lofty columns of solid rock and immense ceilings ; near the gate is seen a splendid monument, wherein is buried a certain holy Mahometan, of the sect of those called Kalendars; who is said to have constructed this mosque at his own expense." This latter part of De Laet's description refers to the *Bolund Darwaza*, and the great quadrangle, to be described hereafter. At present we are approaching the palaces from the eastern or Agra direction.

The first building passed is the ruin of a quadrangular outwork or barbican. Then on your right is a vast collection of dark vaults known traditionally as the Mint,\* and a hall, said to be the Hall of Account, on the other side. No coin or bullion has ever been found here, nor have I ever heard of any coin discovered elsewhere with inscriptions proving it to have been struck at Fattehpur.

\* In 1579 this Mint must have been at work, for it is stated in the *Akbarnama* that it was managed by Khwaja Abdul Sumud.—(*Bleeker's Ain Akbari*, p. 495.)

We will now suppose the visitor to have taken up his quarters in the staging-house or dâk bungalow, formed in what is believed to have been the emperor's record office and to be desirous of acquiring some general knowledge of the neighbourhood before going out to inspect the ruins.

Fatthepur-Sikri owes its selection as a royal residence to the circumstances that attended the birth of Mirza Sulim, afterwards the Emperor Jahāngir, whose mother was a Hindu Princess of the Amber family, married to the great Akbar. The Amber family was one of Kuchwaba Rajputs, a tribe believed to have been originally settled in the Gwalior country, and to have emigrated thence in the twelfth century. Their chief at the time of the marriage was Bahara or Bihari Mull, who had been among the first adherents of Babar, and his daughter was chosen by the young emperor in pursuance of his constant policy of uniting the Hindus and Moslems of India into one people. The Rajputni had twins, but they died in infancy just about the time when Akbar, returning from the campaign against his revolted Uzbek nobles, halted at the foot of the rock in 1569. On the top resided a *faqir* or hermit, Shekh Sulim, called Chishti after his spiritual father who came from Chist, a village in Persia. The holy man persuaded the royal couple to take up their abode in his neighbourhood, and such was the salubrity of the air, joined, we are assured, to the holy hermit's spiritual exertions, that a son was born to them during their stay, and endowed by the grateful parents with the name of the Faqir Sulim. This name the Prince continued to bear for the next five-and-thirty years, till raised to the throne in 1605 as the Emperor Jahāngir. The legend mentioned in the account of the Agra Fort to the effect that its foundation was owing to persuasions on the part of Sulim Chishti must be taken with one correction. Akbar's head-quarters were at Agra when the Fatthepur Palace was begun, and the commencement of the Fort

at Agra dates three years earlier than that beginning. Legend explains these events in its usual marvellous fashion. At the time of the royal visit, the hermit, it is said, had a baby son aged six months, who seeing his father buried one day in deep reflection after a visit from Akbar, suddenly broke silence by asking why he sent away the Conqueror of the World in despair. Accustomed to portents, the holy man calmly answered that all the emperor's children were fated to die in infancy unless some one gave a child of his own to die instead. "By your reverence's permission," rejoined the courteous but forward infant, "I will die that His Majesty may no longer want an heir." Then, without waiting to give his father time to forbid the sacrifice, the wondrous child at once expired. Nine months later the prince came into the world. If it were worth while to look for the truth in this story, it might be found that the prince was a child substituted by the faqir for a royal infant that was still-born. But it is mere waste of time to guess without facts, and the allusion is only here suggested because there is a child's tomb, shown as the faqir's, at the back of the great mosque; and those who prefer the appearance of solid ground may like to ponder that, or any less charitable solution.

The palaces and mosques that were raised in consequence of the prince's birth are situated within a walled, but not fortified, enclosure or park, seven miles in circumference embracing the two villages of Sikri and Fattehpur, and having in its centre a huge rock above a mile in length, running from south-west to north-east. Following this direction let us begin with the great gate (*Bolund Darwaza*) raised on a lofty flight of steps from the south foot of the Hill, and towering 130 feet above the upper plateau. Fergusson says:—

"This is Akbar's grandest mosque; but the design is thrown out of harmony by the magnificence of its principal gateway, a splendid object in itself, perhaps the finest in India, but placed where it is it dwarfs the



mosque to which it leads, and prevents the body of the building from having that pre-eminence which it ought to possess."

The reader will judge for himself, but at all events not without bearing in mind, that the gateway was not part of the original design, but was a triumphal arch erected a good many years after the durgah, or sacred quadrangle, of which the mosque forms one and not the least important side. On the left hand as you enter from the quadrangle, below the springing of the arches, is an inscription in bold relief upon the sandstone to the following effect:—

"His Majesty, King of Kings, Heaven of the Court,\* Shadow of God, Julal-uddin Mohummud Khan, the Emperor. He conquered the kingdom of the south, and Dan Des, which was formerly called Khan Des, in the divine year 46th" (*e.g.*, of his accession) "corresponding to the Hijree year 1010. Having reached Fattchpur he proceeded to Agra." Then follow the usual fulsome praises, and then a sudden modulation into the minor key, in the shape of a passage from the Arabic *Hudees*, or sacred traditions, in the true spirit of the slave on the Roman car. "Said Jesus, on Rome be peace! The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house there: he who hopeth for an hour, may hope for an eternity: the world is but an hour, spend it in devotion: the rest is unseen." On the opposite side another carved sentence tells us that *work is worship*. "He that standeth up to pray, and his heart is not in his duty, the same exalteth not himself, remaining far from God. Thy best possession is what thou hast given in alms: thy best traffic is selling this world for the next, &c." This inscription closes with a line that is a little obscure, but may be thus paraphrased, and is a pleasant specimen of a Persian conceit: "Know that the world is a glass where the favor has come and is

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\* Or "whose place is as Heaven."

gone, take as thine own nothing more than what thou lookest upon." This whole set of inscriptions is valuable as a trait of character; the emperor probably dev' d or sanctioned, the idea. He died about four years er the date recorded in that first cited; and perhaps, as his clouded end approached, he may have been led to ponder on the folly of building so many "houses" and forming such vast plans in such a transitory existence. A bridge, like that of Lucerne, decorated with the dance of death.

The following curious scene is related by the malcontent Badaoni to have occurred in the mosque that forms the west side of the quadrangle to which this magnificent entrance conducts the visitor, at the time when Akbar was propagating the reformed religion of which he was to be Chief Imam or High Expositor:—

"To appear in public as the Mujtahid of the age on Friday, the 1st Jumad-ul-uwul 987, in the Jamma Musjid, which he had built near the palace of Fatthpur, he began to read the Khutbah (public Itany). But all at once he stammered and trembled, and in spite of all assistance could hardly get through three lines of a poem which Faizee had composed, so descended from the pulpit." The verses may be thus paraphrased—

- "The Lord to me the kingdom gave,  
He made me good and wise and brave,  
He guided me in faith and truth,  
He filled my heart with right and ruth;  
No wit of man can sum his State,  
Allahú Akbar! God is great."

These lines show a fine ideal of the kingly office.

The so-called "Divine Monotheism" of Akbar was an attempt to throw off the rules of Islam, and substitute an eclectic system obtained by putting together the systems of Zoroaster, of the Brahmins, and of Christianity, and retaining some Mahomedan forms. Few leading Moslems and only one Hindu (Birbul) embraced it, and it fell at the death of its founder, owing to the

opposition of sincere believers and the indifference of the new Emperor Jahángír. But the Hindus continued to prosper till the time of Aurangzeb. Of Akbar's peers fifty-seven were Hindus out of about four hundred; under his grandson Shah Jahán out of six hundred and nine, one hundred and ten were Hindus. Neither Akbar nor Jahángír converted their Hindu wives to the faith of Islam.\*

The quadrangle or court of the durgah is 433 feet by 366. On the west side is the great mosque. Upon the main arch is a chronogram, "this mosque is the duplicate of the Holy place" (*vide* App. C.), which being interpreted gives the Hijri date 979=A.D. 1571. The wings of the mosque are of red stone, with lofty square pillars, in the prevailing Hinduised fashion of the place and time; but the centre is a vast vaulted place of assembly, paved with white marble, and painted about in white and delicate tints in a variety of geometric patterns. Going out at the back we come on an enclosure containing the tomb of the infant above-mentioned, and upon some other records of the earlier days of the hill before it had attracted the notice of royalty or become the seat of a luxurious and literary court. In this small collection of plain-looking *débris* will be found a door purporting to be the entrance to the cave which, as in the early days of Egyptian Christianity, formed the original station of the saint. This is the cave where he lived an unscathed life among the tigers and bears, the foxes and the hares; hard by is the mosque which was built for him by the pious stone-cutters of the neighbourhood, with its very curious curved brackets in shape resembling the letter S; and here is the school or portico where he taught his disciples like a sophist of old Athens. Here also is pointed out the birthplace of Jahángír. Returning to the mosque, the

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\* Max Müller has referred to the subject and given extracts from "Friends and Foes." (*Science of Religion*, I.)

visitor finds the great court-yard before him. To the left is the tomb of the saint, a chamber externally of white marble surrounded by a deep dripstone on a cornice supported by the same remarkable brackets as already noticed at the old mosque of the stone-masons, and reproduced by the builder of the tomb, probably on that account. The outer screens are of the finest pierced work in white marble, and at a distance resemble lace. Inside, the building is only of marble about 4 feet up. At this point occurs a sort of dado, the walls above being wainscoted with red sandstone. All the panels are covered with flowers painted in a somewhat tawdry style by order of Mr. Mansell, who was Collector of Agra about 1836 ; but the old paintings are said to have been merely restored or reproduced. Over the remains of the saint is a sort of bedstead encrusted with fine mother-o'-pearl work, and the nacreous sheen is particularly pleasing in the half-light of the mortuary chamber. The mosque appears to have been finished shortly before the death of the saintly Sulim, who died, according to Mr. Beale, on the 13th February, A.D. 1572. It would appear, however, that the tomb was not completed for a long while, the date 988 H. (1581 A.D.) being inscribed on the inner wall. In the exact centre of the north side of the quadrangle are the tombs of the women ; then a handsome archway confronts the great southern gate. Beyond, in an enormous mausoleum, is the tomb of Islam Khan, a grandson of the saint, who was Governor of Bengal in the reign of Jahāngir.\*

To the north of the durgah, the houses of Abul Fazl and his brother Faizi, Akbar's most intimate friends and followers, have been turned into a boys' school. What is now the English class-room was the zenana ; the

\* Finch, whose description of the shrine and its surroundings is exact and graphic, says, "Herein lyeth the body of a great Kalender at whose cost the whole meskite was builded."

other building contained the public rooms. Eastward is the principal palace, erroneously attributed by the guides to Jodh-Bai, which was perhaps the central *corps de logis* appropriated to the *Zun-i-kulan* or chief wife Roqia Sultan Begam, daughter of Hindal, the emperor's uncle, who survived her cousin and husband, dying at a great age A.D. 1627.

This is the largest of the quarters, and consists of a quadrangle 177 feet by 157 feet, on the four sides of which runs a continuous gallery, from which on north and south rise rooms roofed with sloping slabs covered with blue enamel. Issuing from the lofty and richly carved gate of this palace (which, if not the quarters of the Empress *Zun-i-kulan*, may be looked upon as the more special quarters of the emperor himself) one comes upon a terrace paved with sandstone flags, and formerly enclosed by a colonnade, on which stand almost in a line from west to east the house so called of Birbul, that called "of the Christian lady," together with the *Khas Mahal* or private chambers. Here in another court is a reservoir of water crossed by four causeways meeting in the middle. On the south is the *khwabgah*, the place where the emperor and the more intimate male members of his family perhaps took their siesta on hot afternoons. On the top is the royal bed-room, a chamber of singular simplicity and small dimensions; and at the back of Birbul's Palace (or that of his daughter, as some recent observers argue) is a magnificent stable-yard with 51 stables, each for two horses, in which mangers and rope rings are still existing, all of stone, though the doorways have perished in every stall but one. Let us take these buildings in the above order with a little more detail.

*Birbul's house*, rather, in all probability, that of his daughter, as it stood in the enclosure of the women, is a two-storied building, or carving of red sandstone. Nothing can exceed the massiveness of the materials excepting the minuteness of the finish. It seems as

if a Chinese ivoryworker had been employed upon a Cyclopean monument. Each of the four rooms of the lower floor is but 15 feet square, and each is ceiled with slabs of 15 feet in length by one in breadth. Not a stick of timber is used in any part. These ceilings rest upon bold cornices supported by deeply-arched pendentives. The rooms in the upper storey are of the same size but crowned by massive domes, got by placing a capstone upon 16 sloping slabs, each of which stands upon an abutment, the whole supported on eight sides, rising from the four walls of the room. The bold language of Victor Hugo is very applicable to this house: "Everywhere was magnificence at once refined and stupendous: if it was not the most diminutive of palaces it was the most gigantic of jewel-cases." [*L'homme qui rit.*] Rajah Birbal was one of Akbar's Hindu grantees, and a chief agent in the estrangement of the emperor from Islamism. He was originally a man of letters, taken into favour on account of his wit and his agreeable conversation. It would have been better for him to have remained content with these distinctions, an honoured resident of Fattehpur-Sikri; but he chose to undertake the command of a military expedition upon the North-West Frontier: and here he mismanaged the campaign and perished with eight thousand men and officers in the bleak passes of the Yusufzai country. He was long mourned by his master, who eagerly welcomed the report of his being alive raised by a pretender to his dead friend's name. The Rajah was the only Hindu who became a member of the "Divine Faith" Association, and must have been a serious loss to its imperial founder's projects. His death took place in February A. D. 1586.\*

\* If the difficulty as to the access to the private apartments could be got over, this might be taken to have been the residence of the Master of the Horse, as it looks upon the stable-yard. But, there must have been a wall somewhere, to ensure privacy for the ladies.

*Christian Lady's house.*—Bibi Mariam, say the guides, a Portuguese lady and one of Akbar's wives, lived here, and the house is in good preservation. Here over the doors ran a series of frescoes, representing, says the tradition, the events of Firdusi's poem the *Shah Nāma*. The remains of the figures are very correct and spirited, and suggestive of European artists. One of the doors is surmounted with a tablet<sup>s</sup> supposed to contain the remains of an Annunciation, but the zeal of modern Moslems has destroyed the Virgin and great part of the Angel, so that the figure of the former can be only partially traced, and the latter exists only by his wings. Other panels have other subjects, some from Hindu mythology, but all fading fast away.

Abul Fazl in the 34th section of the *Ain Akbari* gives some particulars about the royal painters, but though he gives the names of several Hindu artists, only mentions Europeans generally as the highest standard of comparison. He gives an interesting report of the emperor's opinions on art. Some one had been vindicating the strictness of Musalman views on the subject in a private party, when Akbar remarked that he did not share these opinions. On the contrary he said that he thought a painter had peculiar opportunities of appreciating God's perfections. "A painter," continued his majesty, "in sketching from life or designing parts of a living subject must become aware that he is incapable of real creation, and so his mind is turned to God, the giver of life, and the knowledge of his heart is enlarged."\*

\* In Finch's journal is a long description of wall-paintings in Jahāngir's Palace at Lahore, among which were very prominent the pictures of Our Saviour and the Virgin Mary, together with portraits of the emperor and principal courtiers and ministers. See also the following extract from *De Laet's* work (already cited, *sup.*, p. 4.) "The royal palace is within the citadel, on the bank of the river, here is the middle gate of the three which open on the river. The entrance from the city is by a broad gate, within which is a smaller one, which opens on a square, where the royal guard are. Turning hence to the left through another gate, one reaches an

It is sad to destroy old traditions ; but there is no reason for believing that Akbar ever married any Christian lady. The memoirs of the Emperor Jahángír (Prince Sulim) say that his mother bore the title of Mariam Zumani, "Mary of the period" (even as a just ruler will still be called "Now-shirwan of his time"), the Mahomedans revering the memory of the Mother of Jesus. The house in question, properly *Sonakla*

inner court in which is seen the king's darbar ; around the latter are the guard-houses of the guard of nobles. Hence one passes into another court, in the midst of which is the King's Devona, with some bed chambers, in which the King is wont to lie in the evening from eight o'clock to eleven. On the wall of this building is a painting of the king, sitting with crossed legs under a magnificent canopy. On his right are Sultan Pornesius, Sultan Caranus, and Timur with his sons. Next to them are Sha Morat and Dan Sha, the brothers of the king, then Emyrza Shorif, the elder brother of Can Asom. (This nobleman is said to be so rich, that he does not allow the garments of his concubines, having been once worn, ever to be put on again, but he orders them to be buried in the ground until they decay. Moreover, he maintains five hundred torch-bearers, they call them *massalgens*, so that when he travels from Agra to his house, which is only one cross distant from the town, not a single torch-bearer moves from his place with his torch, but they are stationed along the whole road.) Next to this nobleman is Emyrza Rosthan, formerly King of Candahar ; then Can Canna, Cuttuph Coun, Rahia Manisengo, Caun Asom, Asoph Caun, Scheck Fereed, Kolish Caun, and Rahia Juggonath (on whose death, it is said that seven of his friends, together with his sister and his brother's son, leapt on the funeral pile of their own accord). On the left of the king is Rahia Bousingh driving away the flies with a little flap ; Rahia Ramdas holding the king's sword ; Cleriff Khan. Mocrib Boucan, Rahia Bossu, Itahia Ransing, Majo Kesso, and Lulla Bersing. Moreover in the same portico, on the right hand portion of the wall whereon the king is painted as above described, there is a picture of the Saviour and the Virgin-mother above the doors. There are besides very many halls and women's apartments in this palace. To describe which at greater length would be tedious. But there is one portico which must not be unnoticed, on the wall of which are painted the progenitors of this King Selim : *viz.* his father Achabar, his grandfather Hamaun, and his great-grandfather Babur ; the last of whom first came into India (as we shall narrate elsewhere) with thirty followers in the guise of Kalenders). Beyond the western gate of the fortress, there is the ferry across the river, from which the royal road leads to Kabul. The whole country on the other side of the river is singularly pleasant."



*Makan* or "Golden House," was once completely gilt and painted without, the beams of the verandah being at the same time covered with couplets by Faizi, Abul Fazl's brother; and was most probably the residence of Juhāngir's mother, the Hindu wife of Akbar above-mentioned in connection with the origin of the whole palace. Whoever this lady was, she is generally supposed to be the same in whose honour the tomb at Sikandra was raised that is now concealed by a printing press.\*

The *Khas Mahal* is a flagged court-yard 210 feet by 120, whose south side is formed by the buildings surmounted by the *khwabgah*, or sleeping place above referred to as crowned by the bed-room of the emperor. The simple chamber, less than 15 feet square, had four doors, over each of which was a couplet in Persian now partly defaced. Such compliments as this appear to have been offered to himself by the emperor:—

"The Janitor of Paradise may see his face in thy chamber-floor,

"The dust of thy court is collyrium for the eyes of the heavenly Hoor." (Hourī.)

On the west angle is a building called the girls' school, and the remains of a screen wall leading due east to the opposite angle where is situated the apartment of the Turkish wife ("Stambuli Begam"). The imperial polygamist had, according to the tradition, not only a Portuguese, but a Mahomedan-European among his wives; and most artistic are the carvings with which her dwelling is decorated. Under the wainscoting of the walls is a sort of plinth about 4 feet high of the most curious fashion. On one panel is to be seen a forest view from the Himalayas; pheasants perch upon the boughs, and tigers stalk through the jungle with their tails brandished; on another the conventional willow of China

\* This building (vide *sup.*, p. 48) is perhaps the sole remnant of the villa of Sikandar Lodi.

nods to sprawling dragons; a third has palm trees; and a fourth grape vines and fruit trees in full bearing. The outside pillars have in some instances curious trees and bold flower-curves climbing them of a much more realised type than is common in Eastern art.

There is, it must be added, no better authority for the Turkish than for the Portuguese lady; and it is open to any one to conjecture as he pleases who was the fair occupant of this apartment of the harem.\*

North-west of the *Khas Mahal* is a garden with a small mosque, the private chapel doubtless of the ladies, and a gallery called the hospital bounds it to the north. Again, turning eastward we come upon the *Punj-Mahal*, a five-storied colonnade, in which each platform in turn being smaller than that on which it stands, nothing is left atop but a small kiosk. This, as it commands a view of the courts of the women and the adjacent apartments, was probably the station of the female servants and the royal children. Or it may have been merely a place to take the air and view the country round on summer nights. The most remarkable thing about this building in its present state is the singular variety in the style of the pillars which support the ceiling of the first floor. On one capital a couple of elephants with interlaced trunks have escaped the iconoclastic punishment that overtook their larger and more conspicuous brethren over the *Hathi Pol* (the great north-west gate to be noticed presently). Another capital has a carving of a man plucking fruit from a tree, which Lieutenant Plunkett, who surveyed the buildings for Lord Mayo, is disposed to believe came from some ancient Buddhist temple. The ground-floor has fifty-six columns; the first floor thirty-five; the next fifteen; the next eight; while the upper pavilion rests

\* In the Khushru Bagh at Allahabad is a tomb, said to be that of the "Tamboli Begam," which may have been corrupted into "Stambuli."

upon four only. North-east of the *Punj-Mahal* and of the *Khas Mahal* is another compound which, like the *Khas Mahal*, has perhaps lost its northern colonnade and screen, and which contains the pavement in the form of a pachisi board similar to that at Agra, only that while that is of marble, this is of stone. North of this pavement and now open to it are the buildings known to the guides as the *Ankh Michauli*, or "Blindman's Buff House," and the *Dewan-i-Khas*, or Chamber of Privy Council.

The *Ankh Michauli* has been usually represented as a place where the emperor played at "Hide-and-Seek" with the ladies of his household; and this story is still told on the spot. It stood, however, beyond the women's apartment and close by the side of the Privy Council-room, to which it probably served as an office containing valuable records and perhaps the regalia of the crown. Observation of the building inside shows that the doorways were once closed with stone doors of which the hinge-holes are still visible; while the recesses rested upon secret coffers with massive sliding slabs secured by padlocks. All have now been knocked open and rifled; and the floors have evidently been dug for treasure. To the west is a precipice crowned by a gallery and lodge for sentries. The place consists in fact of a central strong-room with two others to the south and north and verandahs all round, which were once secured in a similar manner to the chamber within.

In front of this treasury, or whatever it was, is a pavilion once occupied, it is asserted, by a Hindu teacher, tolerated by the eclectic and inquisitive Akbar. This small building is of the purest Jain architecture, each of the architraves being supported by two very singular struts, issuing from the mouths of monsters, and meeting in the middle like the apex of a triangle.

This ornament, according to Fergusson, belongs to the Jain school of architecture of which the temples

on Mount Abu are fine examples. There is a hall in the Palace of Jahángír of Agra, the roof of which is entirely supported by a series of such struts or trusses. The effect is quaint but fine. The tradition ascribes this palace to Akbar, who is supposed to have built it as a residence for Jahángír's Hindu wives when that prince was heir-apparent.

The *Dewan-i-Khas* is another extraordinary building, bearing like the whole of the palace the marks of the author's fantastic yet dignified character. From without it appears to have two storeys, but is in reality open from floor to roof, with a pillar in the centre rising to the height of the upper windows. This pillar has an immense capital, with four stone causeways, each about 10 feet long, leading to the four corners of the chamber, where they meet a cornice or landing place communicating with the ground by a flight of sixteen steps. What was the use of this droll structure can only be conjectured; tradition says that the centre was the seat of the emperor, and that four ministers sat at the four corners, receiving orders for the four corners of the world. But it may be the place mentioned by Badaoni, where the different sects met for controversy (*vide* Max Müller's *Science of Religion*, p. 83).

Badaoni and the *Tabakat* both mention the building of an *Ibadatkhana* at Fattehpur-Sikri in A. H. 982-83 (1585 A. D.) They describe it as possessing four *aiwans*, one for each class of religionists, and as being the scene of discussions among the various denominations. If *aiwan* could be rendered by some word expressive of a side gallery, this might be a bombastical account of the *Dewan-i-Khas*. No other building, at all answerable to the description, is now traceable in the precincts of the palace. It is possible that the disputants were ranged on the four cornices above mentioned, and that the emperor took his place in the middle as arbitrator or moderator of their controversies. The traditional name means "Privy Council Chamber." The

centre and angles of the pillar are covered on the lower sides with clusters of small pendentives.

By a colonnade now partly destroyed, the emperor passed to the *Dewan-i-Am*, a small hall with a deep verandah looking upon an enormous courtyard 360 feet by 180, and about it on four sides is another colonnade in which thousands of people could sit safe from the sun or rain and witness the administration of justice in the manner so dear to an oriental populace. Here no doubt parades of men at arms and animals took place, and a "Curia regis" was held like our "King's Bench" of old, in which causes were heard and petitions received in that publicity by which alone despotic rulers are able to command the love and confidence of their subjects.

The remaining objects of interest are to be seen by going again westward under the higher parts of the rock. Here are water-works by which the water of the lake was raised by means of a series of Persian wheels and a system of reservoirs, until it reached all parts of the residences. The *Hathi Pol* (a curious combination of Hindi and Greek words implying "Elephant Gate") is a massive structure. About 20 feet from the ground the spandrels of the main arch are flanked by two colossal elephants, one on each side, the trunks of which, interlaced as in the act of fighting, no doubt once surmounted the keystone of the arch, till Aurangzeb in the true spirit of Musalman bigotry removed the animals' heads. No grander ornament can be conceived for the gate of an oriental palace like this of Fattehpur-Sikri. Adjoining this gateway is a grand bastion, called *Sungin Burj*, the commencement of the fortifications begun by Akbar, but discontinued, so tradition asserts, by reason of objections on the part of the holy man Sulim Chishti.

Below the *Hathi Pol* is the *Hiran Minar*, a tower about 70 feet in height, studded with imitations of elephants' tusks, from which, as it is said, the emperor was wont to shoot the antelope, whose descendants still

abound in the neighbourhood, and which were no doubt driven by for the purpose. Akbar was capable of sport on a superior scale to this, and on occasion was a mighty hunter of the lion and the bear. But at Fattehpur-Sikri we see him, so to speak, in his dressing-gown and slippers. A large caravanserai concludes our survey of ruins. Hither no doubt resorted 'merchants from Cabul, from the Deccan, and from Bengal; and here were brought embroideries, shawls, and muslins to be exhibited to the ladies of the palace. A colossal viaduct still supports a closed gallery by which the fair residents could be passed unseen over men's heads from the apartments of the Sultana (so-called *Jodh-Bai*) to the windows over the *Hathi Pol*. In this passage will be found a beautiful pierced screen.

An imaginative pen has revived this life of the old time; and we cannot better conclude our visit to Fattehpur-Sikri than by glancing at it in the following extracts from a sketch contributed to *Ledlie's Miscellany* by Mr. J. W. Sherer, C.S.I., in 1852:—

"It is scarcely day. But already a roll of drums is heard, and cannon discharged break rudely and abruptly the silence of the 'solitary morning.' The emperor is an early riser, and the moment of his rising from his couch is announced in this noisy fashion. You will remember that there is a door opening to the south in the *khwabgah* into the space on the opposite side of which the *duftarkhana* stands. Before this doorway, shortly after the roll of the drums, a considerable crowd assembles; immediately at the entrance are drawn up double lines of chobdars or mace-bearers, each carrying a silver stick; outside of these are burkundazes and other armed attendants. In front, and conversing together in groups, stand handsomely-dressed men, who are evidently, both by their deportment and by the respect they meet with from the miscellaneous crowd which girds in the whole scene, courtiers of influence and reputation. One feature of the *ensemble* must not

be omitted ; no one wore beards, except, indeed, such strangers as might be casual spectators, and whom neither interest nor necessity had compelled to conform to the etiquette of the court.

“ The door of the *khwabgah* opens, the large drums thunder from the *nonbutkhana* over the great doorway of the palaco. \* A *nakib* issues forth, mace in hand, and proclaims, in that monotonous tone so familiar to dwellers in the East, the titles of his master. Immediately after him appears in the doorway a broad-chested man of somewhat advanced years. He is simply dressed, but there is a certain chasteness in the simplicity which shows that some little care has been taken to produce it. The material is white muslin, but gold thread is introduced in many parts with a very tasteful effect. You remark his arms—they are so unusually long—his face is very clear, and the colour of the blood so discernible as to give a rich tinge to his olive complexion ; his eyebrows are joined and lowering, which tends to give a severe expression to the excessively bright eyes, which they half conceal. This is Akbar. His appearance is the signal for a loud and general cry of *Allaho Akbar* ! to which the emperor, standing still in the doorway for a moment and bowing very slightly, answers *Jilli-Jalalihu* !

“ This mode of salutation and its answer had been introduced by himself, and it will be observed that the two phrases include his name (*Jilal-udin Akbar*). The courtiers now pressed forward, and were severally noticed with kindness ; then forming a ring round the emperor, the whole procession moved on foot towards the durgah.

“ Akbar was very early to-day, and the *azan* had not yet been proclaimed. Whilst they were moving slowly along, the voice of the *muazzin* was heard from the high-up cupolas of the durgah gateway. The first words he uttered were the same as those which the submissive multitude had just repeated (*Allaho Akbar*) God is great !

But coming from the serene height and in a slow solemn chant, they seemed to bear a more pregnant meaning, and to suggest to a contemplative mind the full interpretation which the eloquent Massilon once gave them, who, when preaching the funeral sermon of the 14th Louis, commenced in a deep undertone, '*Dieu seul est grand mes freres !*' There was one amongst the attendant courtiers, who, on hearing the first sound of the *azan*, stood perfectly still. He was a man of sharp severe features, and noted as the rigid Mahomedan about the court. It is directed in the Mussulman Haddis, that if a person be walking when the *azan* is sounded, he stands still and reverently listens. Abdul Kadir, the begotting historian, for it was he, was not one lightly to omit obedience to the sacred ritual. A gay man of most polished manners, who was walking by the emperor's side, looked round when Abdul Kadir was left some little distance behind ; and catching the emperor's eye, they both laughed. This was the celebrated Abul Fazl, well known to be as lax in matters of faith as Abdul Kadir was rigid. The whole party had now reached the eastern gate of the durgah, on the steps of which an attendant received the emperor's shoes, as no one was permitted to pass within that sacred precinct except with feet bare.

" In the middle of the quadrangle, prayer-carpet were spread opposite to the mosque, and the relative of the Shekh, who was now the Mutuwallie of the durgah, was present to read the prayer. The emperor and his courtiers formed themselves into one long line, and prostrations and other attitudes were performed by the whole assembly in concert, which formed a curious scene.

" After prayers, the emperor paused for a moment within the tomb of the Shekh, for whom he entertained an affectionate remembrance, casting upon it the simple tribute of a jessamine flower. When he returned to the gateway by which he had entered, elephants, led horses, and mounted outriders, were found in attendance. As



the noble elephant upon which Akbar mounted rose from the ground, guns fired, drums were loudly rolled, and the procession swung into motion to the voice of the *nakib*, whose sonorous compliments and adulations were taken up by a large crowd of spectators. As the emperor passed along, his train was swelled by many courtiers, dependants and others who, having made their salaam from some conspicuous corner, put their horses in line. The name of the 'Hiran Minar' having been whispered about, it became generally known that the emperor was going to indulge in a little matchlock shooting.

"The Deer Tower is within the walls, immediately under the hill in a north-westerly direction. There is a paved road leading to it from the palace, which passes under a large gateway called the *Hathi Pol*, or Elephant Gate, from two of these animals sculptured in stone, which stand one on each side of the entrance from without.

"It was a gay sight when Akbar passed under the *Hathi Pol*. First, a troop of cavalry, their spears glittering, their horses fretfully champing the bit; then chobdars, and chuprassies with red turbans and sashes on camels, amongst them the *nakib* still vociferous; the leading courtiers surrounded the emperor's elephant on elephants also, and the mighty animals roll along, tinkling with bells and waving their rich trappings as they go. Other courtiers and officers of the palace follow on horseback, each with his own *burkandazes* and attendants on foot. A band of the rude but not ineffective music of the country accompanies, and their drums are most briskly answered by those of the *durbanan* from over the gateway.

"The emperor ascended to the top of the tower attended only by an old chuprassie, who carried two matchlocks. After Akbar had amused himself for some time firing at deer, which were driven across an open space at a fair distance from the Minar, he sent word down that he was now satisfied with sport and ordered

a review of cavalry, to commence, which had been arranged for that morning.

"A man now ascended the Minar, richly dressed, his countenance not wholly unpleasing, but still haunted by that terrible expression of uncertainty of temper, which so marked his character ; for it was Prince Sulim. He saluted his father, and stood by his side looking on as the cavalry came into sight. There was a fine young man leading the troops mounted on a showy horse, who every now and then glanced up to the Minar, as if for approval ; this was Prince Khusrû, Sulim's son. He had recently got his *mansub*\* and was as proud of it as lad could be.

"The inspection of cavalry concluded, Akbar and the Prince came down, and mounting on elephants moved in procession towards the palace. There is a large serai on the right of the Minar as you return to the Hathi Pol. Travellers of many nations were standing in front of this place, having come out to see the emperor pass. Amongst them were two men of swarthy hue dressed in ecclesiastical cassocks. The emperor's eye immediately caught them, and he, apparently knowing what nation and calling they were of, gave an order for them, to attend him in the evening.

"When Akbar arrived within the palace, he alighted at the gate of the building, partook of a repast, and afterwards sent for the Rajah Birbal. The Hindu Chief, a man of agreeable and cheerful features, came over, plainly dressed, in a palki or large open litter, accompanied by his secretaries and a few footmen, and was soon hard at work with Akbar in political papers and converse. It was now a busy time in the town : marketing was going on briskly in the streets, men were washing and dressing in the public manner the East

\* The *mansubs* were military commands, and their respective (nominal) numbers marked a rank in the Moghul peerage. None but princes of the blood had more than 5,000 horses—H. G. K.

admits of, some were cooking and others were eating their food with the peculiar solemnity of oriental meals. In one place was loud haggling about a bargain, in another some bunniah was vociferating '*dohai padshah*,'\* against a trooper, who had taken much more atta than was right for his money. Everywhere noise; everywhere bustle and life.

"At twelve, Akbar dismissed the rajah after a hard morning's work, wishing to be left alone, as he said, for a meditation on the orb which then stood at meridian height.†

"And now came on that time so full of unaccustomed imagery, to an European mind, the noon of an Indian day—imagery, indeed, whose picturesque features familiarity has not concealed from the perception of native writers. The Rajah Sudraka in his drama of the Toy Cart thus describes the mid-day scene:—

- The cattle dozing in the shade  
Let fall the unchamped fodder from their mouths :  
The lively ape with slow and languid pace  
Creeps to the pool to slake his parching thirst  
In its now tepid waters ; not a creature  
Is seen upon the public road, nor braves  
A solitary passenger the sun,  
Amongst the sedgy shade : and even here  
The parrot from his wry bower complains,  
And calls for water to allay his thirst.'

"And more poetically the great Kalidasa says in the Hero and Nymph:—

"Tis past mid-day. Exhausted by the heat  
The peacock plunges in the scanty pool,  
That feeds the tall trees' root : the drowsy bee  
Sleeps in the hollow chamber of the lotus  
Darkened with closing petals : on the bank  
Of the now tepid lake the wild duck lurks.'

"Can this be the Fattehpur of three hours ago—all

\* *Dohai* "two appeals:" the *Clameur de Haro* of the East, and a common invocation addressed to great men.—H. G. K.

† Akbar's faith borrowed from Parseism.—H. G. K.

slumber and silence ? Drowsy shrowded figures stretched on every shopboard—scarce a soul in the streets ;

‘The very houses seem asleep.’

“Pompeii could scarcely be calmer . . . .

“The city woke from its repose by three o'clock ; where men were not fairly on their feet again they were chattering to each other, lazily, from charpoys. The streets buzzed and hummed again with life. The loud laughter and merry shouts of children at play rang in the air. Servants who would be wanted as soon as the evening set in, as chupprassies and attendants, were slowly getting some of their clothes on. Dancing girls, who lived in the upper rooms over shops, were gradually appearing in their little balconies, either chatting with their own musicians, or laughing and joking with people in the streets. Led horses began to pass by, their heads reined tightly up, their eyes bandaged and their grooms holding them by a long handkerchief. The dogs got up out of the dust and limped about, snarling amongst themselves over garbage. Akbar had spent the afternoon in a sort of desultory chat with Abul Fazl and Feizi. He had sent for them about one o'clock for he had happened to remember the two priests who were standing at the serai in the morning. And then, from remembering them, his thoughts passed to other priests who had come before, and with whom he had had discussions. So he sent for his two friends to consult what difficult questions should be put to the priests, and to chat, generally, on the subject of religion. The laxity of Akbar's faith as a Mussulman, and his singular freedom from bigotry, has led some to regard him as an earnest inquirer, from whom, unhappily, the circumstances of his birth, education, and position concealed the truth ; and, in this point of view, he has been compared to Scipio. That he was constantly with jesting Pilate, asking ‘what is truth ?’ there can be no doubt ;

but he seems to us, as far as we can understand his character, to have been more interested in the question than its answer. He was more amused at new doctrines, new theories, new objects of veneration, than burdened with the difficulties which surrounded the acceptance of any of them. And there surely is no parallel between a grave and powerful mind bowed down, everlastingly, with the stern dilemmas of that great enigma—Whence and Whither? and the superficial curiosity of an intellect, that was too restless to bind itself permanently to any particular code of opinions.

“The roar of the town swelled up, but to a fanciful ear it seemed unlike the same sound in the morning—there was a subdued exhaustion perceptible—in character with the heavy atmosphere and the dead sky. The emperor attended by his household servants passed on foot out of the palace, where he had spent the day, into the *khwabgah*. He sat for a short time there in the garden, by the side of the fountain and partook of fruit. Then putting a costly shawl over his shoulders, and taking a jewelled sword in his hand, he moved into the *Dewan-i-Khas*. Carpets were spread in the middle of the square, and cushions of faint blue velvet and silver laid on them. When Akbar was seated, he ordered Abul Fazl and Feizi to be admitted. They were close at hand, and entering, were directed to sit down. Then the two ecclesiastics were summoned, whom the emperor had seen in the morning at the serai. One of them was a young man of pleasing countenance; the other much older and of a very battered appearance. The elder priest held up a crucifix in his hand as soon as he entered, at which Akbar smiled, and putting his hands together, slightly bowed his head. Abul Fazl at this juncture remarked with a malicious sneer, that he was sorry Abdul Kadir was not present. The emperor laughed and immediately sent for him. Conversation with the Portuguese priests was a difficult matter, but, however, it was effected after a fashion. The dis-

cussion was not very profitable, for it consisted chiefly of Akbar relating cures, which had been effected by Mussulman saints, and miracles which had been wrought at their tombs, and insisting that, if the priests' religion were true, they ought to be able to authenticate it with miracles. The priests replied that in their own country there were relics of good men, which had often effected cures, but that on account of these supernatural qualities, they were esteemed very precious, and people were not willing that they should be removed out of the kingdom.

"Conversation was going on in this desultory way, when the younger priest remarked that he had something very singular to show the emperor, if it was his pleasure to see it. Curiosity was excited; Akbar said, certainly, that he wished to see everything novel and rare, and begged the priest to exhibit. The young man feeling in a pouch under his cassock, said that he required a light. This was immediately ordered, and then he, retiring a little, applied the fire to something which he held concealed in his hand, after which smoke was seen issuing out of his mouth. At this Akbar laughed contemptuously, and said, that every juggler in the country that frequented fairs would do it ten times better. 'Why,' he cried, 'they will bring fire out of their nostrils as well as smoke. If your magic was no better than this, you would not make one rupee a month.'

"This badinage was put an end to by the young priest explaining, that there was no feat intended in producing the smoke, but that the curiosity was that the smoke itself was very soothing and agreeable, and that from partaking of it the mind of man became philosophic and cheerful. The priest then opened his hand, showed a small clay pipe; he also exhibited some of the fragrant weed from out of his pouch. Akbar was much interested, and sent immediately for Hukim Abul Futteh Gilani to ask his opinion of the herb. He insisted in

the meantime on trying it, much against the remonstrances of Abdul Kadir, who was now present, and who assured him it was a device of the devil, and had probably been brought direct from his satanic majesty by his servants and emissaries, the priests. When the hukim came, he found the emperor coughing very much ; for Akbar, not being quite up to the mysteries of the pipe, had swallowed a good deal of smoke and was suffering accordingly. The hukim with a grave face examined the herb, and afterwards, being ordered by the emperor to try it, declared that it was a pleasant and, possibly, a healthful weed, but that the smoke required purifying before it was imbibed. 'What is it called?' asked Akbar. 'TOBACCO,' answered the priest. Akbar agreed with the hukim that the smoke would be better for purification, but inquired how this could be better effected. The hukim replied that he thought it might be made to pass through water, and from that night he commenced the series of experiments which ended in the invention of the hukah.

"Shortly after, the priests obtained permission to retire. Akbar then rose up and went with his friends through the aperture in the wall, which leads into the *Dewan-i-Am*. There were great crowds of people in this enclosure, anxiously watching the little door which opens at the back of the throne gallery. As soon as Akbar appeared through this and took his seat, a great shout of applause rose up from all sides. In this place he sat nearly half an hour, talking and laughing with Abul Fazl, who stood by his side. Occasionally a horse would be put through the ménage in front of his seat ; now a wild-looking man would try and attract his attention with a pair of tiger cubs, or a jogee with both his arms stiff and attenuated from being held up aloft, would stand like a prophet denouncing silently a city before him. At length another shout announced that the emperor had again withdrawn into the *Dewan-i-Khas*. And now seated with a small circle of courtiers

around him, he reclined back on his cushions to listen to an old man with a white beard, who was going to give an oriental version of the Ring of Polycrates :

“ ‘There was once a king,’ began the old man, ‘very rich, very powerful, very just and wise. He had thousands thousands of soldiers, lakhs of cavalry, an innumerable multitude of servants. This king also had a very wise vazir, of high birth, noble mien, extensive learning : Rustum in battle, Solyman on the judgment seat, without peer in the days gone by, and wholly unmatched by men of the present day. This vazir had a daughter of exquisite beauty, sharp intellect, gentle disposition ; a nightingale in voice, a cypress in stature, a partridge in her gait. The plenty of the morning lay on her cheek, and the blackness of midnight in her raven hair ; a Zuleikha ! a Leila ! hoo, hoo ! cried the old man in great enthusiasm.’ ”

“Then he told the tale of the ring. Substantially the same as the Ring of Polycrates, a tale which has wandered over many lands. Whether from east to west or from west to east, we must leave Professor Liebrecht to decide. But the moral which it enforces in Herodotus, namely, that it is impossible to avert the envy of the gods from overgrown prosperity, is a purely Greek notion, and quite dissonant to oriental ideas.

“More stories succeeded to this ; and when at length the old man’s voice ceased, after the last tale, no approbation followed.

‘ And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
To thank his tale, he wondered not—  
The king had been an hour asleep.’ ”

“However, the complete hush, after the long flow of animated words, awoke the emperor, and, bidding farewell to his friends, he moved off into the *khwabgah* for the night.

“All is dark and silent—rising from the city amidst the few specks of light beneath come the cries of watch-



men ; while from the darker mystery beyond the walls swell faintly and dismally the bark of jackals, and the sudden yelp of fiercer beasts. A night breeze blows over one, like that dreary wind, which in Moslem belief is to precede the day of judgment. Why is there such terror—such awful forlornness in its moan ? The air is big with doom ! The scene we have witnessed to-day is to pass not by the common operations of change and time, but in blackness and darkness away."

### BHURTPOOR.\*

As it is a very usual conclusion to a visit to Fattchpur for the traveller to proceed by way of Bhurtpoor to Muttra, a short account of that route may be here added, taken chiefly from Captain Walter's *Gazetteer*.

The area of the Bhurtpoor State is nearly 2,000 square miles, the length from north to south being 76 miles, and the breadth 48, with large ranges of hills, the highest of which is 1,357 feet above the level of the sea. The soil is chiefly a light loam with a tendency to become sandy near the rivers. None of these streams are navigable, and they usually dry up about two months after the cessation of the periodical rains. The population is about 376 to the square mile, of which 82 per cent. are Hindus. The total annual income of the state is about a quarter of a million of our money, of which fully four-fifths are derived from the land. The state is well administered, taxation being light, and much done for the comfort and well-being of the people in the way of irrigation works, hospitals, and schools. The majority of the people are of the same tribe as the bulk of the Sikhs : the famous Jât race of which so

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\* This being a word famous in British Military history, I have left in its familiar mistransliteration. The correct spelling would be Bharatpur.

much has been said and so little verified. They are believed to be a wave of the immigration from Central Asia that was so long poured upon North-West India, but have now become in manners, language, and religion almost identical with the Rajputs and other Hindus whose ancestors entered the country at a still earlier date.

The ruling family indeed lays claim to a Rajput origin. Be this as it may, it first emerges into historical light in the person of Churaman, a robber chief who became powerful under the patronage of the celebrated Syud ministers of Furokhsir about 1720, about four years after the same administration had established the East India Company in Bengal. The grandnephew of Churaman was Suruj Mull, who founded the city of Bhurtpoor, and ruled there about the middle of the last century. From that time till the dissolution of the last framework of the Moghul Empire, Suruj Mull and his descendants continued a *quasi*-independence (like that of the old electors of the German Holy Roman Empire) until brought into contact with the British in 1803. The state was then somewhat reduced in power and resources. Fresh troubles in 1825 led to the active exercise of the British protectorate; and the late rajah died when his son was only two years old. British officers have had an opportunity during the long ensuing minority of developing the capacities of the state into what we see it now. The principal trade is the production of salt by evaporation and its exportation to British territory.

The town is surrounded by a mud wall with a ditch, now nearly dried up. The fort is at the north-east extremity, and is memorable for having for more than six weeks held at bay General Lake, the conqueror of Hindustan. It must of course be added that this ill-success on Lake's part was due less to the strength of the place than to the failure of the General to provide a proper siege-apparatus, arising probably from an excess of confidence begotten by the success of the recent *coup*.

*de main* at Aligurh. As soon as the battering train was in complete readiness, and the Bengal army prepared for a renewal of the siege, the rajah made his submission, handing over the keys of the fort, and suffering a penalty of £200,000, and the loss of a part of his territory. Twenty-three years later, Lord Combermere attacked the fort, which had been occupied by an usurper, and replaced the rightful heir after blowing up a bastion and taking the place by storm. On this second occasion the British underwent a loss that was comparatively trifling, while 6,000 of the garrison are estimated to have been slain.

The extreme length of the town including the fort is a mile and-a-half, the extreme breadth nearly as great. The town is prosperous, containing a population of over 60,000. Many of the streets are paved, and there are two handsome Hindu temples, one of which has a large town clock. The Government has also built a fine mosque for the use of its Mahomedan subjects. The markets are clean, well supplied, and orderly. The palace contains a magnificent stone staircase, and a fine suite of rooms laid out and furnished in the European style. In this the rajah receives his European visitors, and gives dinner parties to guests from neighbouring stations.

For many years past, the Rajahs of Bhurtpoor have had a curious private manufactory of *chowris* (fly-brushes) resembling in shape those of yak's tails, so common in Northern India, but made in this instance out of pieces of sandal-wood and of ivory. Each *chowri* is skilfully carved out of a single piece, and the art is confined to a few families in the service of the Maharajah, who keep it a strict secret.

From Bhurtpoor is a journey of 21 miles to Deeg. The road is metalled and kept in good repair, but presents much to remind the traveller that he is no longer in British territory. Growths of *babul* (the gum-arabic) and *furash* (the tamarisk), with its larch-like foliage, fringe

the fields, attesting the dryness of the soil ; men on foot and on horseback pass, clad in winter in the dark-green coats of quilted cotton so favoured by the Jâts, and often carrying matchlocks and native sabres. Peafowl and other tame birds feed by the roadside ; and the traveller could scarcely repress the thought that man is the only game permitted to be shot in the Bhurtpoor territory, were it not that the undefended state of the village, the valuable ornaments of the women, and the peaceful trains of bullock-carts laden with goods and journeying without guards, tell him that the armed men he has met are only armed for show. Half-way the road goes through the ancient town of Kumbher, once a strong place of the old Thakurs, and still containing a fortified palace on a slight eminence.

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#### DEEG.\*

ARRIVING at Deeg, the visitor is ushered into the palace of Suruj Mull. The town and fort have been the seat of several severe struggles, having been taken after a stubborn fight and a protracted defence in 1775 by the Moghul army under Nujuf Khan ; and again in November 1804, when the British defeated Holkar under the walls of Deeg in what was considered by Lake the hardest fought battle of the war. In the following month, having chased Holkar out of the Doab, Lake returned to Deeg, where a portion of the Mahratta leading men had sheltered themselves, and delivered a night assault before which they fled, evacuating the fort on Christmas day. \*

Outside the fort is the palace, an extensive quadrangle of garden-houses mostly built of buff stone richly carved, and so well cared for that they look as if only finished

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\* *Vide* note on Bhurtpoor, p. 84.

yesterday. There are four principal buildings, the Gopal Bhuwun, the Nund Bhuwun, the Sawun Bhaddon—a summerhouse between the garden and a large reservoir with bathing-ghâts—and lastly, the large and semi-sacred range of buildings called Kishun Bhuwun and Suruj Bhuwun. The Kishun Bhuwun is sacred to Sri Kishun or Krishna, the hero of the country round, and the Nund to his foster father; while the Suruj Bhuwun, a building of white marble, is the original building of Suruj Mull. The Maharajah hospitably places the Gopal Bhuwun at the disposal of travellers under a few very simple conditions which no gentleman would desire to violate.

The palace of Deeg has been generally and deservedly commended. It is one of the few native dwellings which would be appreciated in Europe; because, without losing its Eastern grace and wealth of ornament, it is also adapted to Western notions of cleanliness and comfort. The water-works are abundant and skilful, and the garden well stocked with fruit trees. Fergusson (II, 603) commends the architecture "for grandeur of conception and beauty of detail." "The glory of Deeg," proceeds this author, "consists in the cornices which are generally double, a peculiarity not seen elsewhere, and which for extent of shadow and richness of detail surpass any similar ornaments in India either in ancient or modern buildings. The lower cornice is the usual sloping entablature" (which in Fattehpur-Sikri, *vide sup.*, has been called 'dripstone') . . . . "The upper cornice which was horizontal is peculiar to Deeg, and seems designed to furnish an extension of the flat roof."

The gardens and ghâts are haunted by troops of screaming peafowl, and clouds of wild blue pigeons inhabit the eaves of the palace and breed in the walls of the fort. The town contains a population of nearly 17,000 souls, and has a good school and a dispensary supported by the Maharajah's government.

From Deeg to Govardhan is about eight miles, and

leads once more into British territory. As Govardhan, however, contains the monuments of his race, the Maharajah is anxious to have it placed under its own management; and as he is after all only a delegate of the British, there seems no objection to his receiving this small piece of territory in exchange for an equivalent from that now in his charge. The people will not in either case be losers, for the general principles of British administration will continue to apply to both.

### GOVARDHAN.

AT Govardhan there are two masonry tanks of considerable extent, both surrounded by temples, tombs, and bathing-ghâts. In the autumn feast of the *diwâli*, it is a charming spectacle to see them illuminated by night, while thousands of people throng the lofty steps. On the eastern side of one of these reservoirs is the *chuttri* of Buldeo Sing, the grandfather of the present rajah, and in the building nearest the water is a curious painted roof, almost as full of figures as the famous Tintoret of the Venetian Ducal Palace, though it need hardly be added in a far different style of art. Here is to be seen Lord Lake on his elephant encouraging his men to storm the defences of Bhurtpoor; the Thakur Ranjit Sing crowned with the sun calmly smiles at their vain efforts; while his ally Jeswunt Rao Holkar, presiding at a nautch in the fort, informs his followers, that, whatever may be going on outside, he really cannot be disturbed. At the back the valiant Jâts are sabring the British artillery men at their guns, while Lake's second in command, in hat and feathers, sits dejectedly in his tent door and confers with a native attendant.

One mile further eastward in the depth of a wild wooded country is the *chuttri* of Suraj Mull, the virtual founder of the Bhurtpoor State (d. 1763). It is a beautiful building of the kind described by Mr. Ferguson (II, 601-2), supposed to mark the spot where the

Thakur's ashes were deposited. On every side of the reservoir that fronts it, handsome landing-places run out into the still water with deep and widest staircases between; a venerable banyan tree (*ficus Indica*) shades the south side, and sends its pendant shoots towards the water: apes swarm on its boughs, and from time to time a kingfisher quivers his flashing colours over the lake before he strikes a fish, or a great crane makes a swoop from one side of the woods to the other. The spot is singular in its repose, its silence, and its irregular charm. This is the *Kusam-sarovar*, or "Lake of Flowers," one of the stations in the ban-jâtra or autumn perambulation of the groves sacred to Krishna and his companions.

The following description,\* no less graphic than learned, is borrowed from Mr. Growse—

"On the borders of the parish of Râdâhkund is *Kusum-sarovar*, or 'The Flowery Lake,' a magnificent sheet of water, 460 feet square with broad flight of stone steps broken up on each side by projecting arcades of elegant design into one wide central and four smaller lateral ghâts. A lofty terrace runs the whole length of the east side, having its front relieved with two-storied kiosques and alcoves of varied outline, and bears the stately tombs of Suruj Mull, the founder of the present Bhurtpoor dynasty, and his two queens, Hansiya† and Kishori. From this point rough fragments of rock crop up above the surface of the soil, and form the beginning of the celebrated range of Govardhan, Giri-raj or the Royal Hill, as it is generally styled. About the centre of the line stands the town of Govardhan, clustering round a vast irregularly shaped tank, called the Mânsi Gangâ. Here a great fair, known as the Dipdan, or 'Offering of Lamps,' is held every year on the festival of

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\* Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, XI, p. 1.

† Hans-ganj, on the banks of Jumuna, immediately opposite Mathura, was founded by this Rani, in consequence of a diversion of the road which once passed through it. It is now that most melancholy of all spectacles—a modern ruin.

*dewalli* about the beginning of the cold season, and is frequently attended by as many as 100,000 visitors. On the bank stand two sumptuous monuments in memory of two of the late Rajahs of Bhurtpoor; and from a rising ground opposite frowns the ancient temple of Harideva, the most solemn and imposing, save one, of all the religious buildings in Upper India. The pilgrims visit in order all the sacred sites in the neighbourhood. Many of the incidents to which the attention of the pilgrims is directed in the course of the perambulation refer to Krishna's amours with Radha, and accordingly have no place in the original Pauranik legends, where Radha is barely mentioned even by name. It would seem that the earliest literary authority for these popular interpolations is no Sanskrit work whatever, but a Hindi poem, entitled the *Braj Bilas*, written by one Brajbasi Das, so recently as the middle of last century. He represents his work as derived from the Puranas, which, except in the main outlines, it certainly is not; and as he mentions no other source of information, it may be presumed that he had none beyond his own invention and some floating local traditions which he was the first to reduce into a connected series. A striking illustration of the essentially modern character of orthodox Hinduism, despite its persistent claim to rigid inflexibility and immemorial prescription."

### MUTTRA.\*

A JOURNEY of about fourteen miles more terminates at Muttra (Mathura), the birthplace of Krishna and the scene of his early adventures. Here like Apollo with Admetus, the son of Devaki, the Deipara of Hindu mythology, tended herds and sported with the nymphs. Every spot of any consequence is sacred, and the names

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\* *Vide* note on Bhurtpoor, p. 84.



of the towns and villages are often given by devout Hindus as prænomens to their sons. For most of the following particulars the writer is indebted to the *District Memoir* by Mr. F. S. Growse, which should be consulted by all who wish for details.

Modern Hinduism is a phenomenon of comparatively short standing, more recent for example than Latin Christianity. Yet just as the last-named system has borrowed rites, and even sites, from Judaism and Paganism, so has the religion of the worshippers of Krishna produced survivals from the earlier faiths of the Buddhists and the Vedic Aryans; and though the flood of Mussalman iconoclasm has poured over India, it has left, on receding, the trace of many an ancient landmark. It thus happens that Muttra (to use the more familiar though barbarous nomenclature of British India History), though scarcely a century old as a city, offers to the social geologist numerous strata out of which he may illustrate progress and reproduce the past.

We learn from General Cunningham that "in A.D. 634, the temples of the gods were reckoned by Hwen Thsang at five only, while the Buddhist monasteries amounted to twenty, with 2,000 resident monks. The number of Buddhist monuments was also very great, there being no less than seven towers, containing relics of the principal disciples of Buddha. But notwithstanding this apparently flourishing condition of Buddhism, it is certain that the zeal of the people of Mathura must have lessened considerably since A.D. 400, when Fa Hian reckoned the body of monks in the twenty monasteries to be 3,000, just one-half more than in the time of Hwen Thsang's visit. The date of Mahmud's invasion was A.D. 1017, or somewhat less than 400 years after. It is during these four centuries that we must place not only the decline and fall of Buddhism, but its total disappearance from this great city. We may infer that the votaries of Sakya Muni were expelled by force, and their buildings overthrown to furnish materials for those of

their Brahmanical rivals; and now these in their turn have been thrown down by the Mussulmans."

At Bindrabun (Brinda Vana) hard by, is the curious cruciform temple of the same Man Singh, described by Fergusson (*ut sup.*, 600), built about 300 years ago, but still a fine specimen of modern Hindu art. Both the towns abound in specimens of more recent date, which show that the Hindus have an assimilative power and an eye for form, combined with a deeply tenacious conservatism, which maintains their architecture as a living reality after the art seems to have degenerated or died in other Aryan countries.\*

Everywhere is seen the same reverence for life, respected very properly by the British authorities. At Govardhan a massive monolith bears a trilingual inscription setting forth that Colonel Seymour, C.B., will punish any soldier who shoots game in the neighbourhood. The apes swarm in all the towns, and the people willingly share their houses and food with these poor relations. The sparrows pecking grain in front of shops in the bazaar will not deign to rise, will scarcely move at the approach of your foot.

The present city of Muttra is the latest of three that have existed in the neighbourhood; and, curiously enough, it is the only one that stands upon the river banks. The first city—the "Methora" of the Greeks—appears to have been on or near the site of the modern village of Maholi, some four miles to the south of the modern city, near the Agra Road. About the time of the commencement of the Christian era, the city was standing further north (but still far to the westward of the present course, at least of the river), where the temple of Bhutesur and the Jamma Musjid of Aurangzeb still mark the situation of the chief Buddhist monasteries and temples of those times. How Buddhism fell, and by whom was founded the modern city, stretching

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\* *Vide App. A.*

down from the last-named locality to the river side, are points of great obscurity. The mound which marks the citadel of Mahomedan times is not older than the time of Akbar, the fort of which it marks the place having been founded by the nephew-by-marriage of that emperor, Man Singh, an ancestor of the present Rajah of Jaipur. It is in the space—some thirty square miles in extent—bounded by a line drawn from Maholi to the river on the south, and on the north by the face of the present city, that the diggings and discoveries are going on which seem destined ere long to aid in the reconstruction of the Vedic and Buddhist history of this part of India.

“On the decline of Buddhism,” we are told, “Mathura acquired that character for sanctity which it still retains as the reputed birthplace of Krishna.” His brother Balaram is mentioned by classical writers as a tutelary demi-god of ancient Muttra, under the name of the Indian Hercules, which shows, at all events, that there was some story on the subject current there before the Christian era. The legend, modern as it is, that the heroic brothers were driven out to Dwarka by a monarch of Magudha, where Buddhism was first established, seems also to point to a real event. Confirmed by “the notices of contemporary travellers and the results of recent antiquarian research, it represents the fact that for a time Brahmanism was almost eradicated from Hindustan.”

In the centre of the city of Muttra is a mosque with four enormous minarets and three bulbous Tartar domes of the time of Aurangzeb. This building hardly transcends the standard, such as it is, of Muscovite taste; but when it glittered, as it once did, with encaustic tiles, produced no doubt a better effect than now.

A good general view of the city is got by crossing the railway bridge and looking at the countless stone buildings and bathing-ghâts reflected in the calm mirror of the broad Jumna. The river front its low, and would be monotonous were it not for the irregular contour of

the ground on which it stands. The only elevation that occurs to break the sky line is a stone tower in memory of some forgotten suttī, a self-immolated widow. It is 55 feet high and a staircase leads to the summit. The central mosque was erected in 1662 A.D., on the site of a Hindu temple. From this central point diverge the roads to Deeg, Bindrabun, and the British Cantonment, two of which are paved with flag-stones, an extensive work completed by the local municipality at a very considerable cost, the whole length being over a mile. The entrance towards the station is crowned by a carved gateway from native designs, intended as a memorial to a late magistrate of the district, Mr. Hardinge. The massive dwellings by which the street are lined have been erected within the last seventy years, and are proof of the prosperity of the place under British rule, and of the taste and skill which still continue to actuate the Hindu architects of these parts. The temple which Bernier describes as standing outside the Deeg gate was removed—in the time of the fanatic Aurangzeb—to make way for a red stone mosque of no particular interest or beauty.

This was the temple of Kesuva Rai, built on the site of one of the principal Buddhist monasteries, and still standing when Tavernier visited Muttra in the early part of Aurangzeb's reign. It is supposed by Cunningham (who has made a plan of the foundations) to have been 250 feet by 72, with a plinth 25 feet above the ground. Many remains of Buddhist sculpture have been found here and in the immediate neighbourhood. There are also found fragments of sculpture in a higher style, which are supposed to attest the presence, at a still earlier date, of a party of Bactrian Greeks among the Muttra Buddhists.

In the years that followed the establishment of modern Hinduism—of which it was perhaps a centre—Muttra became a sort of holy land for the Hindus. The monastery would then be taken into possession by the priests of the renewed faith, and the old system, as far

as possible, obliterated. Thus, the head-quarters of Pagan Rome became the centre of Latin Christianity; and thus the favourite seat of the teacher here became the birthplace of Vishnu's latest incarnation and the shrine of his faith, until he in turn made room for the untenanted sanctuary of Islam.

"Whatever the changes in the national religion, the city of Mathura has continued from remotest antiquity the chosen centre of Hindu devotion. When Buddhism prevailed throughout India, the votaries of Sakya Muni were drawn from the far distant realm of China to visit its sacred shrines; and when the temples of Buddha were swept away by the torrent of Pauranik Brahmanism, the desecrated sites were speedily occupied by the new order of divinities. Though the city was plundered of all its accumulated wealth by the very first of the great Mahomedan invaders, the sacred edifices themselves survived, and for a period of 700 years continued to be enriched with successive donations, till Aurangzeb, the last and most fanatical of the Delhi emperors, razed every stone to the ground, built mosques with the materials, and abolished the very name of the city, changing it from Mathura to Islamabad. But the humiliation was of short continuance; after the death of Aurangzeb and the virtual extinction of the empire, first ensued a period of anarchy in which neither Hindu nor Mussulman had the power to crush his neighbour, and then the tolerant sway of Great Britain, under which both are equally protected. Thus, in the present day after the lapse of a century and half from the period of its utter ruin, though the temples have lost the charm of antiquity, nor can boast the normous wealth which they enjoyed in the days of the great Indo-Scythian sovereigns, Kanishka and Huvishka and their successors till the invasion of Mahmud, yet the holy city has no lack of stately buildings, with which, as described of old in the *Harivansa*, it rises beautiful as the crescent moon over the dark stream of the Jumna.

"According to Hindu topography, the town forms the centre of a circuit of 84 *kos*, called the circle of 'braj' or 'brajmandal.' This word braj also means in the first instance 'a herd;' the noun being derived from the root *vraj*, 'to go,' and acquiring its signification from the fact that cattle are always on the move and never can remain long on one pasture ground. Hence it arises that, in the earliest authorities for Krishna's adventures, both Vraja and Gokula are used to denote not the definite localities now bearing those names, but any chance spot temporarily used for stalling cattle: in attention to this archaism has led to some confusion in assigning sites to the various legends.

"The perambulation commences in Bhadon (August—September) on account of the anniversary of Krishna's birth being celebrated in that month. The number of sacred places,\* woods, groves, ponds, wells, hills and temples—all to be visited in fixed order, is very considerable; but the 12 bans or woods, and 24 groves or upabans, are the characteristic feature of the pilgrimage, which is thence popularly called the 'Ban-jatra.' The numbers 12 and 24 have been arbitrarily selected on account of their mystic significance, and probably few Hindu ritualists, if asked offhand to enumerate the 24 upabans, would agree precisely in the specification." [Growse.]

The following is the description given by Tavernier of the temple of Kesava Deo, just before its destruction by Aurangzeb:—

"THE PAGODA OF MUTTRA is one of the most sumptuous edifices of India, once a place of great resort for pilgrims, who now go there no more; the heathen having lost their devotion for the place since the Jumna has removed its bed to half a league away. For after bathing it takes them now too long to return to the

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\* There are said to be 5 hills, 11 rocks, 4 lakes, 84 ponds, and 12 wells.

temple, and they might encounter something which would render them impure upon the road.

"The building is . . . , very elevated and magnificent, built of a red stone quarried near Agra, and used in most of the buildings of that city and of New Delhi.

"The pagoda, then, is seated on a great platform of octagonal shape with revetments of hewn stone surrounded with two bands of sculptured animals, chiefly apes, one being 2 feet above the ground, the other as high as the platform. Two staircases of 15—16 steps each lead to the top, the steps only broad enough for one person to mount at a time. The pagoda only fills half the platform, the rest being an open place in front. It is cruciform like other buildings of the sort, and in the middle is a great dome, with two smaller ones at the sides. From top to bottom the exterior is covered with figures of rams, apes, and elephants hewn in the stone, interspersed with niches containing monsters, and windows reaching up to the springing of the domes with balconies to each capable of holding four persons covered by little vaults supported on columns. The monster statues in niches are contained round the domes . . . and it is frightful to see such a collection of hideous images. The pagoda has but one, and that a very lofty, portal, flanked by many columns and statues of men and of monsters. The choir is closed by a railing made of columns of stone six inches in diameter, and no one is admitted but the principal Brahmins who obtain entrance by a secret door."

Having paid a fee of Rs. 2, Tavernier got a sight of the idol, and thus describes it—

"The Brahmins opened a door in the centre of the railing on the inner side, and I saw 16 feet within to a sort of altar covered with old brocade, and the great idol over it. The head was of black marble with what looked like rubies for eyes. The body and arms were quite concealed by a robe of red velvet. A smaller idol with a white face was placed at each side."

Without any great natural advantages, the population of the town exceeds 60,000, and some of the inhabitants are very wealthy; the Seths (Muttra's chief traders) return their income at above £20,000 a year.

### BINDRABUN.

"LIKE most of the local names in the vicinity, the word Brindá Ban is derived from an obvious physical feature and, when first attached to the spot, signified no more than the 'tulsi grove,' *brinda* and *tulsi* being synonymous terms, used indifferently to denote the sacred aromatic herb, known to botanists as *ocimum sanctum* (*Basil*).

"There is no reason to suppose that Brindá Ban was ever the seat of any large Buddhist establishment; and though from the very earliest period of Brahminical history, it has enjoyed high repute as a sacred place of pilgrimage, it is probable that for many centuries it was merely a wild uninhabited jungle, a description still applicable to Bhandir Ban on the opposite side of the river, a spot of equal celebrity in Sanskrit literature. It was only about the middle of the sixteenth century after Christ, that some holy men from other parts of India came and settled there and built a small shrine, which they dedicated to Brindá Devi. It is to their high reputation for sanctity that the town is primarily indebted for all that it now possesses. Its most ancient temples, four in number, take us back only to the reign of our own Queen Elizabeth: the stately courts that adorn the river bank and attest wealth and magnificence of the Bhurtpoor Rajahs date only from the middle of last century; while the space now occupied by a series of the largest and most magnificent shrines ever erected in Upper India, was fifty years ago an unclaimed belt of jungle and pasture-ground for cattle. Now that communication has been established with the remotest parts of India, every year sees some splendid addition made to the artistic trea-



asures of the town; as wealthy devotees recognize in the stability of British rule an assurance that their pious donations will be completed in peace, and remain undisturbed in perpetuity.

"The foundation of all this material prosperity and religious exclusiveness was laid by the Gosains, who established themselves there in the reign of Akbar. The leaders of the community were by name Rupa and Sanatana from Gaur in Bengal. They were accompanied by six others, of whom three, Jiva, Madhu, and Gopal Bhat, came from the same neighbourhood, Swami Hari Das from Rajpūr in the Mathura District, Hari-bans from Devaban in Saharanpore, and Byas Hari Ram from Orcha in Bundelkhund. It is said that, in 1570, the emperor was induced to pay them a visit, and was taken blindfold into the sacred enclosure of the Nidhban,\* where such a marvellous vision was revealed to him, that he was fain to acknowledge the place as indeed holy ground. Hence the cordial support which he gave to the attendant rajahs when they declared their intention of erecting a series of buildings more worthy of the local divinity.

"The four temples commenced in honour of this event still remain, though in a ruinous and sadly neglected condition. They bear the titles of Gobind Deva, Gopi Nath, Jugal Kishor, and Madan Mohan. The first named is not only the finest of this particular series, but is the most impressive religious edifice that Hindu art has ever produced, at least in Upper India. The body of the building is in the form of a Greek cross, the nave being 100 feet in length, and the breadth across the transepts the same. The central compartment is surmounted by a dome of singularly graceful proportions; and the four arms of the cross are roofed

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\* The derivation of this word is a little questionable. It is the local name of the actual Brinda grove, to which the town owes its origin. The spot so designated is now of very limited area, hemmed in on all sides by streets, but protected from further encroachment by a high masonry wall.

by a waggon vault of pointed form not—as is usual in Hindu architecture—composed of overlapping brackets, but constructed of true radiating arches as in our Gothic cathedrals. The walls have an average thickness of 10 feet, and are pierced in two stages, the upper stage being a regular triforium, to which access is obtained by an internal staircase. At the east entrance of the nave, a small narthex projects 15 feet ; and at the west end, between two niches and incased in a rich canopy of sculpture, a square-headed doorway leads into the choir, a chamber some 20 feet deep. Beyond this was the sacrarium, flanked on either side by a lateral chapel; each of these three cells being of the same dimensions as the choir, and like it vaulted by lofty dome. The general effect of the interior is not unlike that produced by St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

“Under one of the niches at the west end of the nave is a tablet with a long Sanskrit inscription. This has unfortunately been much mutilated, but enough remains as record of the fact that the temple was built in *Sambat* 1647, *i.e.*, A.D. 1590, under the direction of the two Gurus Rupa and Sanatana. The founder, Rajah Man Sinha, was a Kachhwaha Thakur, son of Rajah Bhagawan Das of Amber, founder of the temple at Govardhan, and an ancestor of the present Rajah of Jeypur. He was appointed by Akbar successively governor of the districts along the Indus, of Kabul, and of Bihar. By his exertions, the whole of Orissa and Eastern Bengal were re-annexed ; and so highly were his merits appreciated at court, that though a Hindu, he was raised to a higher rank than any other officer in the realm. He married a sister of Lakshmi Narayan, Rajah of Kuch Bihar, and at the time of his decease, which was in the 9th year of the reign of Jahangir, he had living one son, Bhao Sinha, who succeeded him upon the throne of Amber, and died in 1621 A.D.\*

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\* *Vide* Professor Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 341.

"The next temple to be described, *viz.*, that of Madan Mohan, one of Krishna's innumerable titles, stands at the upper end of the town on the river bank near the Kali Mardan Ghât, where the god trampled on the head of the great serpent Kali. It consists of a nave 57 feet long, with a choir of 20 feet square at the west end, and a sanctuary of the same dimensions beyond. The total height of the nave would seem to have been only about 22 feet, but its vaulted roof has entirely disappeared; the upper part of the choir tower has also been destroyed. That surmounting the sacrum is a lofty octagon of curvilinear outline tapering towards the summit; and attached to its south side is a tower-crowned chapel of precisely similar elevation, and differing only in the one respect that its exterior surface is enriched with sculptured panels, while the other is quite plain.

"The temple of Gopinath, which may be slightly the earliest of the series, is said to have been built by Raesil Jî, a progenitor of the Shaikhawat branch of the Kachh-waha Thakurs.

"He accompanied his liege lord, Rajah Man Sinha, of Amber, against the Mewar Rana Pratap, and further distinguished himself in the expedition to Kabul. The date of his death is not known. The temple, of which he is the reputed founder, corresponds very closely both in style and dimensions with that of Madan Mohan already described; and has a similar chapel attached to the south side of the sacrum. It is, however, in a far more ruinous condition: the nave has entirely disappeared; the three towers have been levelled with the roof; and the entrance gateway of the court-yard is tottering to its fall. The special feature of the building is a curious arcade of three bracket arches, serving apparently no structural purpose, but merely added as an ornamental screen to the bare south wall. The choir arch is also of handsome design, elaborately decorated with arabesque sculptures; but it is partly

concealed from view by mean sheds which have been built up against it, while the interior is used as a stable and the north side is blocked by the modern temple.

"The temple of Jugal Kishor, the last of the old series, stands at the lower end of the town near the Kesi Ghât. Its construction is referred to the year *Sambat* 1684, i.e., 1627 A.D., in the reign of Jahangir, and the founder's name is preserved as Non-Karan. He is said to have been a Chauhan Thakur; but it is not improbable that he was the elder brother of Raesil, who built the temple of Gopinath. The choir, which is slightly larger than in the other examples, being 25 feet square, has the principal entrance, as usual, at the east end; but is peculiar in having also both north and south, a small doorway under a hood supported on eight closely-set brackets, carved into the form of elephants. The nave has been completely destroyed.

The great temple, founded by Seth Gobind Das and Radha Krishan, brothers of the famous millionaire Lakhmi Chand, is dedicated to Rang Jî, a dakhani title of Vishnu. It is built in the Madras style, in accordance with plans supplied by their Guru, the great Sanskrit scholar, Swami Rangachari, a native of that part of India, who still presides over the magnificent establishment. The works were commenced in 1845, and completed in 1851, at a cost of 45 lakhs of rupees. The outer walls measure 773 feet in length by 440 in breadth, and enclose a fine tank and garden in addition to the actual temple-court. This latter has lofty gate-towers, or *gopuras*, covered with a profusion of a coarse sculpture. In front of the god is erected a pillar, or *dhwajastha stamba*, of copper gilt, 60 feet in height and also sunk some 24 feet more below the surface of the ground. This alone cost Rs. 10,000. The principal or western entrance of the outer court is surmounted by a pavilion, 93 feet high, constructed in the Mathura style after the design of a native artist. In its graceful outlines and the elegance of its reticulated tracery, it presents a strik-

ing contrast to the heavy and misshapen masses of the Madras Gopura, which rises immediately in front of it. A little to one side of the entrance is a detached shed, in which the god's *rath*, or carriage, is kept. It is an enormous wooden tower in several stages, with monstrous effigies at the corners, and is brought out only once a year in the month of Chait during the festival of the Brahmotsav. The mela lasts for ten days, on each of which the god is taken in state from the temple along the road, a distance of 690 yards to a garden, where a pavilion has been erected for his reception. The procession is always attended with torches, music and incense, and some military display contributed by the Rajah of Bharatpur; and on the closing day, when only the rath is used, there is a grand show of fireworks, which people of all classes congregate from long distances to see. The image, composed of the eight metals, is seated in the centre of the car, with attendant Brahmans standing beside to fan it with chauries. Each of the Seths, with the rest of the throng, gives an occasional hand to the ropes by which the ponderous machine is drawn; and by dint of much exertion, the distance is ordinarily accomplished in the space of about two and-a-half hours.

"The town of Maha Ban is some five or six miles from Mathura, lower down the stream and on the opposite bank of the Jumna. It stands a little inland, about a mile distant from Gokul, which latter place has appropriated the more famous name, though it is in reality only the modern water-side suburb of the ancient town.

"Maha Ban, the true Gokul, is by legend closely connected with Mathura; for Krishna was born at the one and cradled at the other. Both, too, make their first appearance in history together and under most unfortunate circumstances as sacked by Mahmud of Ghazni in the year 1017 A.D. From the effects of this

catastrophe, it would seem that Maha Ban was never able to recover itself. It is casually mentioned in connection with the year 1234 A.D., by Minhaj-i-Siraj, a contemporary writer, as one of the gathering places for the imperial army sent by Shams-ud-in against Kalinjar; and the Emperor Babar, in his memoirs, incidentally refers to it, as if it were a place of some importance still, in the year 1526 A.D.; but the name occurs in the pages of no other chronicle; and at the present day, though it is the seat of a Tahsili, it can scarcely be called more than a considerable village.

“By far the most interesting building is a covered court called Nanda’s Palace, or more commonly the Assi Khamba, *i.e.*, the Eighty Pillars. It is divided by five rows of sixteen pillars, each into four aisles, or rather into a centre and two narrower side aisles with one broad outer cloister. The external pillars of this outer cloister are each of one massive shaft, cut into many narrow facets, with two horizontal bands of carving, the capitals are decorated either with grotesque heads, or the usual four squat figures. The pillars of the inner aisles vary much in design, some being exceedingly plain, and others as richly ornamented with profuse and often graceful arabesques. Three of the more elaborate are called respectively the Satya, Dwapar, and Treta Yug; while the name of the Kali Yug is given to another somewhat plainer. All these interior pillars, however, agree in consisting as it were of two short columns set one upon the other. The style is precisely similar to that of the Hindu colonnades by the Qutb Minar at Delhi; and both works may reasonably be referred to about the same age. As it is probable that the latter were not built in the years immediately preceding the fall of Delhi in 1194, so also it would seem that the court at Maha Ban must have been completed before the assault of Mahmud in 1017; for after that date the place was too insignificant to be selected as the site of so elaborate an edifice. Thus Fergusson’s

conjecture is confirmed that the Delhi pillars are to be ascribed to the ninth or tenth century. Another long-mooted point may also be considered as almost definitely set at rest, for it can scarcely be doubted that the pillars as they now stand at Maha Ban occupy their original position. Fergusson who was unaware of their existence, in his notice of the Delhi cloister, doubts whether it now stands as originally arranged by the Hindus, or whether it had been taken down and rearranged by the conquerors; but concludes as most probable that the former was the case, and that it was an open colonnade surrounding the Palace of Prithi Raj. 'If so,' he adds, 'it is the only instance known of Hindu pillars being left undisturbed.' General Cunningham comments upon these remarks, finding it utterly incredible that any architect, designing an original building and wishing to obtain height, should have recourse to such a rude expedient as constructing two distinct pillars, and then without any disguise piling up one on the top of the other. But however extraordinary the procedure, it is clear that this is what was done at Maha Ban, as is proved by the outer row of columns, which are each of one unbroken shaft, yet precisely the same in height as the double pillars of the inner aisles. The roof is flat and perfectly plain except in two compartments, where it is cut into a pretty quasi-dome of concentric multifoil circles. Mothers come here for their purification on the sixth day after childbirth—*chhathi puja*—and it is visited by enormous crowds of people for several days about the anniversary of Krishna's birth, in the month of Bhadon. A representation of the infant god's cradle is displayed to view, with his foster-mother's churn and other domestic articles. The place being regarded not exactly as a temple, but as Nanda and Jassoda's actual dwelling-house, Europeans are allowed to walk about in it with perfect freedom. Considering the size, the antiquity, the artistic excellence, the exceptional archaeological interest, the celebrity

amongst natives, and the close proximity to Mathura of this building, it is perfectly marvellous that it found no mention whatever in the archæological abstract prepared in every district by orders of Government a few years ago, nor even in the costly work compiled by Lieutenant Cole, the Superintendent of the Archæological Survey, which professes to illustrate the architectural antiquities of Mathura and its neighbourhood.

"Let into the outer wall of the Nand Bhavan is a small figure of Buddha; and it is said that, whenever foundations are sunk within the precincts of the fort, many fragments of sculpture—of Buddhist character, it may be presumed—have been brought to light; but hitherto they have always been buried again, or broken up as building materials. Doubtless Maha Ban was the site of some of those Buddhist monasteries, which the Chinese pilgrim Fa Hian distinctly states existed in his time on both sides of the river. And further, whatever may be the exact Indian word concealed under the form Klisoboras, or Clisobora, given by Arrian and Pliny as the name of the town between which and Mathura the Jumna flowed—*Amnis Iomanes in Gangem per Palibothros decurrit inter oppida Methora et Clisobora*, Pliny, Hist. Nat. vi, 22—it may be concluded with certainty that Maha Ban is the cite intended."—[Growse.]

## HISTORY OF THE MOGHUL EMPIRE.

[This brief abstract is intended to connect the scenes described in the *Guide* with the annals of the empire which gave them their interest. For further particulars the reader may be referred to Elphinstone, and to a work by the present writer.]

THE so-called Moghul Empire of Hindustan (more properly, the Empire of the Chaghtai Turks) dates only from the time of our Henry the VIII, when Agra was taken from the Afghan House of Lodi, on the 10th May 1526. The victor was Sultan Babar, Prince of the small but fertile district now called Kokand. He was the sixth in descent from Tamerlane, of the Chaghtai tribe



of Turks; but his mother was a Moghul lady descended from the other great Tartar leader Chinghiz Khan, and hence the name by which the family is known.

Babar often resided at Agra, and his great and decisive battle with the Rajputs took place near Sikri in 1527. He constructed several works of use and pleasure there, and after his death his remains rested in the neighbourhood, until the time came for them to be taken to Kabul. Full particulars of Babar's history can be obtained by readers of his most delightful autobiography translated by the late Mr. Erskine. Few monarchs have ever made such confessions, and none has made any so calculated to endear the writer to his readers. The hairbreadth escapes and adventures of his unfriended youth, the campaigns of his maturer life, are blended with records of the enjoyment of scenery, descriptions of drinking bouts, repentances, exaltations, and depressions such perhaps as make the reader feel his kinship with the Tartar General of a bye-gone day nearer than with many an impostor one's own contemporary.

Babar died at Agra, in 1530, Ruler-in-Chief of all the territories of Hindustan and Kabul, from the Hindu-Kush to the borders of Bengal. He was succeeded by his son Humáyun, who, though not destitute of ability, was fated to exhibit some of the inferiority almost inherent to one born and brought up in an assured greatness than he has done nothing to earn. Besides quarrels with his brothers, Humáyun ere long became involved in disputes with the Afghan settlers of Bihar, and in 1539 was driven out of that province and forced to retreat rapidly to Agra almost alone. In the following year Humáyun suffered another defeat in an encounter with Sher Shah, near Kanouj, in consequence of which he left Agra with the portable part of his treasures and betook himself to Sindh. Here he married a Persian lady named Hamida Begum, and in 1542 she bore him a son, afterwards the Emperor Akbar, at a place on the Indus called Amarkot.

Humáyun after many wanderings ultimately recovered Hindustan as much by luck as by management, and died from an accidental fall from a building still shown in a part of old Delhi, near which he was buried. His mausoleum with its high plinth, its pointed arches, and its marble domes, may be regarded as the model of the Taj. The minarets at the four corners of the terrace which make so conspicuous a feature of the latter edifice were not suggested by anything at Delhi. Cunningham is of opinion that they were borrowed from Sher Shah's tomb at Sasseram in Bihar.

For a clear though concise account of the state of the empire at the time of Humáyun's death, the reader must be referred to Elphinstone's admirable *History of India*, Book VIII, Chap. II, where he will find all that is likely to interest him as to the king's tenure of office, the duties of his ministers, his powers and method of administration, his army, the state of the law and of the church, the superstitions of the age, the position of the Hindus, and the very small extent to which they had embraced the religion of their conquerors. The revenue system is believed to have been much the same as what now exists, and the state of the people in general to have been fairly prosperous and comfortable; for the latter statement the testimony of contemporary travellers, some of them Europeans, is fortunately forthcoming. Sher Shah, the interrex of Humáyun, introduced the rupee, which was adopted by his successors the Moghuls, and is the basis of that now in use. The architecture of those days was the Pathan type described by Fergusson (II, 646—696,\* and amongst the Hindus) the various styles still prevailing, though entirely without arches and, generally, without the admixture of Mahomedan details now all but universal. The invading Musalmans were stout ruddy men, resembling the modern Afghans. They wore cloth coats, tight trousers, armour,

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\* *Vide also infra*, p. 129.

and boots. The subsequent assimilation to Hindu manners and costume was initiated by Akbar. It was about this time that the language known as Urdu or Hindustani first became popular; and it is stated that the earliest work in this mixed speech was written at Jaipur at the time to which we are referring.

In 1556, Akbar, then only fourteen years of age, ascended the throne under the auspices of a powerful minister, from whose dictation he was only able to get free by the most strenuous exertions. These exertions, however, were of vital importance, forced upon him as they were at such an early age. It was owing to them that his character became hardened and developed; and to them and to the general circumstances under which he gradually established his power he was indebted for the ultimate prosperity of his reign. From the fall of Bairam Khan in 1560 commenced the era, short but grand, of the Moghul empire in its palmy state. The young ruler was the first to see that, if he would rule the Hindus, he must not treat the Musalmans as favored foreigners, but must blend all his subjects into a common nationality, with common rights and privileges. It was then that the foreigners of Akbar's own creed were made to feel the weight of his hand; and he himself by cutting off all connections with Central Asia and intermarrying with the Kuchwaha House of Amber (Jaipur) pointed out the paths of concord in which his Indian subjects, of whatever origin, were henceforth to walk. Akbar is the planter of that still backward growth—Indian nationality. Under him also arose a new creed and a new architecture: the former destined to fade, the latter a thing which has not perhaps yet come to maturity (*vide App. A*).

The next seven years were occupied in campaigns against various enemies of the new *régime*, Hindu and Musalman; and in 1568 the celebrated Fort of Chittur was taken, and the gates were transported to the new Fort at Agra, where they are still to be seen. This

conquest seems to have powerfully affected the imagination of Akbar, who at the same time caused the two *colossi* to be made which Bernier saw at Delhi a century later, but which were originally placed on guard in front of the river gate at Agra.\* Bernier found them complete, "two great elephants of stone . . . ; upon one of them the statue of Jumel (Jai Mull), the famous Rajah of Chittur, and upon the other that of Poltaht† his brother . . . These two great elephants," adds the lively traveller, "together with the two resolute men sitting on them, do at the first entry into the fortress make an impression of I know not what greatness and awful terror." Akbar was fond of elephants at gates ; another pair will have attracted the attention of visitors to Fattehpur-Sikri.

Two years later saw the foundation of the palace at the last-named place and the birth of Jahángir at first called Sulim after the spiritual, perhaps real, father, Sheikh Sulim Chishti.

The saint's tomb was built after the emperor's return from the conquest of Gujerat. 1586 was the year of Birbul's death in the north. In this year also Prince Sulim was married to the daughter of Bhugwan Das of Amber, his maternal uncle. In the following year he married another Hindu princess, the daughter of the Rajah of Jodhpur, hence sometimes known as Jodh-Bai.

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\* So Cunningham, who thinks this the only way of accounting for Finch not seeing these statues when he visited Agra in 1611. I find, however, in Purchas a statement to the effect that Finch did see something of the sort, not in front of an outer gate at all, but on the top of one within. After describing a gate to the north, and another to the west, Finch (*apud* Purchas) adds—"Beyond these two you pass a second gate over which are two *rajars* in stone." It is true he seems to know nothing of Chittur, saying that they were slain in the king's durbar, and he does not mention their being seated on elephants. Nevertheless a marginal note adds "by multitudes oppressing were slain : and here have elephants of stone and themselves figured." All that can be learned of these statues will be found in the *Delhi Handbook*, App. A.

† Spelt Palta by General Cunningham. The real name is Futtah.

In 1592 Bengal was finally settled ; the same year witnessed the birth of Prince Khurram, son of Jahángir, afterwards to succeed as Emperor Shah Jahán. His mother was the abovementioned Jodh-Bai. It was about this time that the emperor reduced the province of Sindh, which had been defended against him by a rebel chief who employed European troops, or at all events, what we now call sepoys, infantry dressed and armed like Europeans. In 1595 an expedition under Morad, the emperor's second son, was sent against the Mahomedans of the Deccan or Dukhin, and in 1598 the emperor followed in person. In 1601 he returned to Agra, having left another of his sons, the drunken Danyal, as viceroy in the south ; and it was in memory of this temporary triumph that the emperor about this time built this magnificent *Bolund Darwaza* at Fattehpur. Just before the emperor had the misery to see his trusted son, the Crown Prince Sulim, in rebellion against him, and poor Abul Fazl, his most intimate companion, assassinated by that son's instigation.

Soon the character of Sulim took worse turns still. His quarrels with his own eldest son Khusru became so violent that the mother, a near relation of the imperial family, and daughter of the great Hindu house of Amber, took poison and died at Allahabad, where her husband was viceroy. Shortly after, the reckless Danyal fell a victim to *delirium tremens* ; and in the midst of all these sorrows the splendid Akbar drooped. The quarrels of his son and grandson, fomented by intriguing courtiers, disturbed his last moments : his once bold intellect was shaken by superstition, and he gave way to the priests and died in the faith of Islam, October 13th, 1605.

Some peculiarities of Akbar's character will appear in the incidental notices scattered through the accounts of the buildings in this work. Like most despots he was wilful and freakish ; unlike most despots he showed no disposition to indulge his whims at the expense of others.

Rebels against his government were treated with firmness ; but a door of conciliation was kept open as long as possible. Next to his civil administration was his religious reform dear to his heart : but he never allowed it to interfere with politics. Though Hindu and alike appeared to him as bigots, yet no Musalman nor Hindu was neglected, if a good minister, on account of his religion. We see him at his worst at Fattchpur, and it is not very bad. Granting that a great empire requires a splendid court, we need not carp at a little eccentricity or extravagance where everything else was good. At his best Akbar is a wonderful improvement, not only on the average of Eastern rulers, but on the average of rulers in any time or place. His landed settlement, carried out by his friend and minister Rajah Todur Mull, was actuated by extreme good judgment and humanity. Its objects were—

(i) A correct survey of the area and quality of the soil in each estate.

(ii) An estimate of the value of the produce and a settlement of the portion of the said value to be left respectively to the tiller of the soil and to the state.

The land when surveyed was classified in three divisions according to its productive powers. The amount of produce that a certain portion ( called a *bigha* ) of each class was capable of yielding was then estimated, an average struck, and one-third settled on the state and the rest on the cultivators.

The value of the state's share was then to be taken, calculated upon the average of the prices current for the past nineteen years, but this commutation was not annual, but made from time to time. It only applied to the more valuable sorts of produce—what are still in some parts of the country known as *zabtee* or “liable to rise.” The cereals were grown on simpler terms, the cultivator being at liberty to claim a division, and carry off his share, leaving the officers of government to deal with the rest themselves.

It will be seen that the weak point in this system was not by any means its harshness on the cultivator, but its tendency to tempt him to grow nothing but food-crops. Under the present system where an estate is assessed at a certain sum of money, the proprietors are induced to grow what will pay the highest prices. Under Akbar's system if a man preferred to grow such crops he was certain to have a demand for money made upon him; but so long as he stuck to the husbandry of the simpler kind, he was only liable to have one-third of his wheat, maize, or millet carried off from his field, and he could cart home the remainder without further trouble.

We have no evidence as to the duration of this system. Probably it was much relaxed before the end of the reign of its founder's dissipated successor.

Besides this Akbar abolished many taxes and fees; he paid his officers chiefly in cash, and thus avoided much of the oppression entailed by the almost universal oriental practice of assigning the revenue of land to feoffees and official grantees, who again employ agents and farmers, and so discourage and depress the actual occupants.

Nor was this active-minded ruler less attentive to the control of his own private household. The interesting *Ain* of his friend Abul Fazl give a complete idea of the methodical magnificence, the mingled splendour and simplicity that formed so marked a feature of Akbar's character. The first part of *Ain Akbari*, "Regulations of Akbar," has been translated with valuable comments by the late Professor Blochmann, of the Calcutta Madrasah, and gives a minute picture of this truly astonishing reign.

To complete the present sketch it may be necessary to add from contemporaneous European evidence, that Akbar did in fact actually administer justice daily in public, standing below the throne on a platform said to be still preserved in the Dewan-i-Am at Agra: that he was frugal, self-controlling, and plain in his habits, given

to the useful arts, industrious, and affable. That, with all this, he was no fribble may be seen from the extent and completeness of his military conquests, and in some important departments of his civil reforms. The church hierarchy, for instance, was destroyed by him after years of patient struggle, and none of his successors were ever able to restore it, though some at least did not want the will.

The chief buildings of Akbar are: (1) Agra Fort, (2) Humáyun's tomb at Delhi, (3) Fattépur-Sikri.

Jahángir is less interesting both in character and career. Born in the purple he does not attract us like his more self-made predecessor. He was a debauchee, too, and cruel, and had but little of that self-control which a despot requires if he is to act his part with dignity and usefulness. Yet his relations with his son Khusru and his wife Nur Jahán were alike such as to render it fit that we should give him the benefit of them in judging his character. The son was as violent as the father, and constantly caballing against the government and person of the emperor, yet the latter often forgave him and refrained to the last from either killing or injuring him. The wife had reason to suspect the emperor of the murder of the husband of her youth; he was a drunkard, and she had no children by him: yet in spite of all this the affection of this capable and high-spirited woman for the emperor knew no bounds. While he was alive she perilled her life for him; when he was dead she mourned him strictly and to the end. It is fair to assume that Jahángir must have had fine qualities. We know enough of him to understand in part what these must have been. Like his father he was just and liberal; and unlike his father he could conciliate the orthodox Musalmans without outraging the feelings of the Hindus. Sir T. Roe's account of Jahángir in his private hour is most quaint: "He fell to ask me questions, how often I drank a day, and how much, and what? What in England? What beer was? How made



And whether I could make it here? In all which I satisfied his great demands of state." The emperor's tolerant disposition and the bigotry of Sultan Khurram are well contrasted, and there is an amusing account of a quarrel which the ambassador had with the latter on the occasion of "Iones : his lewdness." Mr. Jones being one of the suite whom they wanted to convert into a Musalman follower of Shah Jahán. Roe seems to have recovered him. Coryat observes of Jahángír : "He likes not those that change their religion, he himself being of none but of his own making, and therefore suffers all religions in his kingdom." He had numerous wives. One, the Rajputni Princess, mother of Khusru, died, as we have seen, before her husband's accession. Professor Blochmann gives a list of no less than twenty of these ladies. Sultan Khurram, afterwards successor of Jahángír under the title of Shah Jahán, does not seem to have been own brother of Khusru ; his mother appears to have been Jodh-Bai, another Rajputni ; there is reason to believe that Jahángír himself did not always know who were the mothers of his sons, but the memoirs of Shah Jahán support this conclusion.

The emperor had been, as above mentioned, openly recognized as heir by his father shortly before the death of the latter. This is confirmed by the inscription on the Black Marble Throne that stands on the terrace below the Dewan-i-Khas of the Agra Fort. But his wayward and disrespectful conduct while viceroy at Allahabad disgusted his father, and both his sons Khusru and Khurram had partizans who hoped to make them supplant their father ; but before they could proceed to extremities, the old man's sense of right and expediency had finally pronounced in his eldest son's favour. These intrigues were thus impeded, and Jahángír ultimately ascended the throne without serious opposition in October 1605.

The few remaining dates of his reign with which we

need concern ourselves are as follows: In the first year, 1606, Khusru rebelled, but his rebellion was shortly and sternly suppressed. In 1607, the second year of his reign, Jahángír married the widow of Sher Ufgun, and daughter of Itmád-ud-Daulah whom he had long loved, raising her to the throne matrimonial by the title of Nur Jahán. The new empress was by that time a middle-aged woman, but he associated her with him in the government, putting her name on his coin. Nothing could exceed the attachment that ever afterwards prevailed between this extraordinary pair.\*

In spite of the customary view of women taken by his co-religionists, Jahángír treated his empress with all kind of public honours, deferring to her advice and opinion in all affairs. First her father and, on his death, her brother were prime ministers; and it is even recorded that the emperor's private character was so far reformed that his habits of excessive drinking were confined to private parties and to the evening hours.†

It was about the same time that the tomb of the late emperor Akbar was reconstructed at Sikandra, and (probably) that the Jahángíri Mahl of the Agra Palace was built.

In 1610 another war broke out in the Deccan—the country which Akbar thought he had completely pacified in 1602.\*

In 1616 Prince Khurram, then twenty-four years of age, was honoured with the title of "Shah," and despatched to Burhanpur as commander-in-chief. The actual leader of the troops was Abdulrahim, the trans-

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\* Roe gives a description of Jahángír coming home at Agra from an evening drive with his wife in a bullock cart, "the king himself being her carter."

† The instincts of this great house were monogamous, though their religion and position led to very different appearances. The wife of the unhappy Khusru insisted on sharing his dungeon, a dark tower, where, if any of the inmates died during the absence of the emperor, the body could not be buried till the emperor's return; the door being kept always shut.—(*Finch*.)

lator of Babar's memoirs; and the young viceroy about this time espoused his granddaughter. Besides her, Shah Jahán also took two other Musalman wives, one the lady of the Taj, the other a Persian lady, whose tomb is the Kandhari Bagh at Agra (now the residence of His Highness the Maharajah of Bhurtpoor).

Shah Jahán, then known as Shah Khurram and raised to further honours with the full title that he afterwards bore as emperor about four years later, wielded the military power of the state. Though thus distinguished, he passed the stormy years of apprenticeship by which he was to fit himself for empire chiefly in conquering and administering the kingdoms of the south. About this time Sir T. Roe arrived at court as ambassador from James I of England; and found the court still very splendid, though the administration of the provinces had declined from the regularity that obtained under Akbar. The emperor, though revelling in the most outrageous and maudlin spirit by night, was reserved and full of dignity in the morning; the arts of industry were cultivated with wonderful success, and the influx of Europeans large. Jahángir seems to have known a little Italian. Roementions his calling out to Khurram in full durbar "*mio figlio! mio figlio!*" when some misunderstanding appeared between him and the Christians. The old English travellers are very full of his having his nephews christened by the Jesuits, and how the Christians of Agra, sixty in number, rode in procession to the church headed by Captian Hawkins carrying "St. George his flag for the honour of England."

There are still a dozen tombs in the Protestant Cemetery of Agra of persons who must have come to India about this time, besides those of Catholics in Padritola. The emperor had figures of Our Lord and his Mother on the rosary that he usually wore, and had the sons of his brother Morad brought up as Christians. In 1615 the imprudent and unfortunate Khusru died and was buried by the side of his mother at Allahabad

in the garden that still bears her name. Shah Jahán, though recognized as heir-apparent, was not free from suspicion as to his half-brother's death, but it was never brought home to him, and there is little else in his conduct to justify the imputation of so much treachery. In 1618 the emperor moved northwards; and, mostly remained in Kabul, Kashmir, and the Punjab till his death. His temporary imprisonment by Mohubut Khan and the bold and ingenious efforts by which his devoted wife at last managed his deliverance can be only alluded to in this place. The principal extant buildings of this era are the Tomb at Sikandra, the Mahl in the Agra Palace, and the Mausoleum of Itmád-ud-Daulah. In all of them Hindu influence appears.

On the death of Jahángír, which happened at Rajor, in October 1627, the eyes of all men were at once turned to the serious, industrious figure of his son Shah Jahán,\* then in disgrace in the Deccan. Khusru's son, one Mirza Bolaki, tried to assume the throne (of which, according to strict legitimacy, he was heir). But he was routed and escaped to Persia, where Tavernier relates that he had often met him living very much at his ease at the king's court. Asaf Khan throwing off the yoke of his sister, placed the widowed empress in arrest, and invited the Prince to Agra where he was at once proclaimed emperor by the title of Shah Jahán, that he had borne so long. His brother, the son-in-law of Nur Jahán, was killed, and the lady herself compelled to live in honourable retirement at Lahore, where she died, and was buried by her husband's side in 1648. Shah Jahán at once displayed that turn for graceful sumptuousness that was to mark his era. He celebrated the anniversary of his accession with extraordi-

\* "I never saw so settled a countenance, nor any man keep so constant a gravity, never smiling, nor in face showing any respect or difference of men; but mingled with extreme pride and contempt of all."—(*Roe.*)

nary pomp and expense, but was shortly after called to the Deccan by the rebellion of Khan Jahán Lodi. On this expedition he lost his wife Arjumund Banu, "The Exalted of the Palace," a niece of Nur Jahán's, who died at Burhanpur in the end of 1629. In 1632 the emperor returned to Agra, where great improvements had been for some time going on in the palace, and where he now commenced the mausoleum of his deceased wife in a piece of land that had belonged to his cousin Rajah Man Singh. In 1637 the celebrated Persian adventurer, Ali Mardan Khan, joined the emperor's service, and his taste and skill in public works were as welcome to his new master as his talents for war. It was about this period that the court moved to Delhi, and the new palace and cantonment there were begun, which still bear the name of Shah Jahánabad. In 1647 the future Emperor Aurangzeb appears for the first time in history as leader of an expedition to Kabul. In the following year the Taj buildings were finally completed.

About this time the Persian King Shah Abbas II occupied Kandahar and the surrounding country. Aurangzeb was twice defeated by him : his elder brother Dara Shekoh, the heir-apparent, was then sent at his own request, but met with no better fortune. In 1653 the Moti Musjid, or Pearl Mosque of the Agra Fort, was completed, and Aurangzeb won laurels in the Deccan that replaced those lost at Kandahar. Soon after the four sons of the emperor began to fight for the succession to their magnificent but now ageing parent. Dara, above-mentioned, was a man of the stamp of his great-grandfather Akbar, whose religious system he was known to favour. The second and third were mere men of pleasure, but Aurangzeb was a cold and crafty zealot of the type of Louis the XI, versed in affairs civil and military. All were by the same mother.\* In

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\* The Taj Begum.—(*Tavernier.*)

June 1658 the imperial army under the command of Dara was routed near Agra and the heir-apparent put to flight by Aurangzeb; three days later the victor entered Agra unresisted; and soon after Shah Jahán was deposed.\* He continued to live in regal state at Agra, for the next seven years, the centre of numerous political intrigues that were always detected and baffled by the sagacious usurper of the Peacock Throne.

The chief buildings of Shah Jahán were the Mosque at Agra, Taj, Khas Mahl, Delhi Palace, Jamma Musjid at Delhi, and Moti Musjid of Agra. They are six capital specimens of Moghul taste. †

Elphinstone is of opinion that this was the most prosperous period of native government in India. He considers that the people were less happy than in an average modern European country; but that the reign of Shah Jahán will, in that respect, bear a comparison with that of the Roman Emperor Severus. In pomp and state Shah Jahán was truly splendid; but all his magnificence is not known to have caused embarrassment to his finances. He left large accumulations of coin, bullion, and jewels. It may be noted that Shah Jahán discontinued the custom of marriage with Hindu ladies that had been practised by his predecessors.

His successor Aurangzeb lived for some little time at Agra. \*In 1659 the place was threatened by the Rahtur Rajah of Jodhpur returning from the battle of Rujwa; but nothing came of the attack. The luckless Dara was taken prisoner soon after. He was exposed to pub-

\* Tavernier, who was in Hindustan at the time, relates that after his victory over Dara, Aurangzeb pretended that he believed his father to be dead, obtained possession of the fort by stratagem and imprisoned his father and sister. Shah Jahán died in 1666, "during my last travel in India." Tavernier sees Juhánara taken out of Agra on an elephant, as he then thought with a view to her being put to death. But he was wrong, and she lived many years in retirement at Delhi.

† Vide *infra*, p. 142.

lic gaze at Agra, and the anniversary of Aurangzeb's accession was celebrated there in the same year. The emperor on that occasion signalised his hypocrisy by weeping over the severed head of his elder brother, who was murdered by his orders and buried in Humáyun's tomb at Delhi.

Shah Jahán continued to be confined in the fort, though with signs of outward dignity; and it is the credit of one who generally deserves but little, that the new emperor never visited on his father the intrigues of which injudicious partizans from time to time made him the centre. He died in the palace he had built at Agra in the month of December 1666, with the lovely monument he had raised to the wife of his youth glittering in the winter sun, visible from his chamber windows. In this, as is well known, his body was laid by the side of that of his wife. Aurangzeb's head-quarters had ere this been transferred to Delhi, where he destroyed the famous elephant statues above-mentioned in connection with the capture of Chittur. Fruitless campaigns against the Mahrattas and injudicious oppression of the better-affected Hindus, vexatious reform and fanatical fiddle-faddle marked the rest of this long reign, the last in which the empire of the Timurides was ever to preserve an appearance of unity or greatness. The temporary show of success in the campaigns of the Deccan by destroying the Musalman kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda removed the last barrier against the rising tide of the Mahratta power. Agra became a second class city, the residence of a governor who could not always keep in check the neighbouring Jâts: the emperor grew old far away in the South, and when he died there in 1707 the empire soon began the downward course which the present writer has traced in his work on the subject (*Fall of the Moghul Empire*) from which the rest of this note is abstracted. Farokhsiyar and Mohamed Shah occasionally resided in the palace; after the death of the latter it was the residence of a viceroy. From

this period there is but little to record about the history of Agra. In 1764 it was occupied by the Bhurtpoor Jâts under their celebrated leader Suruj Mull, and the infamous Walter Reinhardt (Sumru) red-handed from the massacre of Patna. In 1770 the Mahrattas re-appeared and occupied the whole Doab, but three years after they were driven out by the Imperial Minister Najaf Khan, on which occasion the Jâts recovered Agra, but only to be finally expelled by the minister next year in 1774. Mahomed Beg of Humadan became the governor and had a precarious tenure of the post for the next ten years, during great part of which Najaf Khan continued to live at Agra in almost regal state. Sumru died at Agra in 1778, and in the following year Najaf Khan left the place in order to live at court and check the intrigues of his enemies around the person of the imbecile and indolent Emperor Shah Alam. Najaf died at Delhi in 1782, and the poor remains of the empire were shaken to pieces by the contests that arose among his survivors. Mahomed Beg shot Mirza Shuffi, the deceased statesman's nephew, in front of the Delhi Gate of the fort as he came on his elephant to seemingly friendly consultation. Another member of the family, Afrusyah Khan, succeeding to the vacant portfolio, Mahomed was besieged at Agra by the united forces of the empire and its ally Madhoji Sindhia in 1784. Presently the new minister was assassinated in his return, the fort surrendered, and Sindhia became what one cannot but denominate master of the situation and the empire. In the violent attempt of Gholam Kadir of Saharunpur to revive the Musalman cause, he was aided by Mahomed Beg, and, on that leader's death, by his celebrated nephew Ismail Beg, a desperate leader of heavy cavalry, whose name long terrified Mahratta imaginations.

In 1787 these confederates (Gholam Kadir and Ismail) besieged Sindhia's General Lakwa Dada in Agra, and fought a furious battle with the relieving force under



General de Boigne near Fattehpur-Sikri. But the siege was raised in June 1788, and the defeated scoundrels went off to Delhi to wreak their last vengeance on the unoffending person of their aged sovereign Shah Alam. In 1792 Ismail was captured and sent into the fort, where he shortly after died a close prisoner, his accomplice Gholam Kadir having been put to death some years before by Sindhia. The Mahratta Governor rebelled in 1799, and the fort was taken by General Person after a siege of 58 days. John Hessing, a Dutch officer, was now for some years governor of the fort, and there he died in 1802. The following year it was attacked by Lake. The Mahratta army, so-called "of the Empire," was commanded by Hessing's successor Colonel Sutherland, but the Mahrattas justly concluding that he would not fight against the British, put him under arrest. After a short bombardment, however, they gladly availed themselves of the colonel's mediations, and the fort surrendered, never again to play an active part in war till 1857.

It may amuse some readers to form an idea of the pomp and state of the Moghul Court at its prime from the description of M. Bernier, who visited Agra and Delhi at the end of Shah Jahán's and the commencement of Aurangzeb's reign. Bernier, it is hardly necessary to add, was a well-educated French Physician, who was for some time employed by Danishmund Khan, the Governor of Delhi. The following extract is from the quaint contemporaneous translation of his "letter to M. de la Mothe le Vayer," dated Delhi, July 1st, 1663:—

"The king appeared sitting upon his throne, in the bottom of the great hall of the *Am-Kas*, splendidly apparelled. His vest was of white satin flowered, and raised with a very fine embroidery of gold and silk. His turban was of cloth of gold, having a fowl wrought upon it like an heron, whose foot was covered with diamonds of an extraordinary bigness and price, with a great orien-

tal topas, which may be said to be matchless, shining like a little sun. A collar of big pearls hung about his neck down to his stomach, after the manner that some heathens weare here their great beads. His throne was supported by six high pillars, or feet, said to be of inassive gold, and set with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. I am not able to tell you aright, neither the number nor the price of this heap of pretious stones, because it is not permitted to come near enough to count them, and to judge of their water and purity. Only this I can say, that the big diamonds are there in confusion, and that the throne is estimated to be worth four *kouroures* of roupies, if I remember well. I have said elsewhere, that a *roupie* is almost equivalant to half a crown,\* a *lecque* to a hundred thousand roupies, and a *kourour*, to 100 lecques: so that the throne is valued forty millions of roupies, which are worth about sixty millions of French livers. *Shah Juhan*, the father of *Aurangzeb*, is he that caused it to be made, to show so many pretious stones as successively had been amassed in the treasury, of the spoils of those antient *Patans* and *Rajas*, and of the presents which the *Omrahs* are obliged to make yearly upon certain festival days. The art and workmanship of this throne is not answerable to the matter: that which I find upon it best devised, are two peacocks covered with pretious stones and pearls, which are the work of a Frenchman called (*Austin de Bordeaux*) that was an admirable workman, and that after having circumvented many princes with his doublets, which he knew how to make admirably well, fled unto this court, where he made his fortune. Beneath this throne there appeared all the *Omrahs* in splendid apparel upon a raised ground covered with a

\* i.e., *Ecu*, the French crown of three livres, so that the rupees of those days would only be worth 15 pence (1s. 3d.) sterling, and the whole throne £2,400,000, quite enough for a seat for any monarch however great.—H. G. K.

great canopy of purpled gold with great golden fringers, and enclosed by a silver balistre. The pillars of the hall were hung with tapestries of purpled gold, having the ground of gold; and for the roof of the hall, there was nothing but great canopies of flowred satin fastened with red silken cords that had big tufts of silk mixt with threads of gold hanging on them. Below there was nothing to be seen but great silken tapestries, very rich, of an extraordinary length and breadth. In the court there was set abroad a certain tent they called the *Aspex* as long and large as the hall and more. It was joyned to the hall by the upper part, and reached almost as far as to the middle of the court; meantime it was all enclosed by a great balistre covered with plates of silver. It was supported by three pillars, being of the thickness and height of a bargemast, and by some lesser ones, and they all were covered with plates of silver. It was red from without and lined within with those fine *chittes*, or cloth painted by a pencil of *Masulipatam*, purposely wrought and contrived with such vivid colours, and flowers so naturally drawn of an hundred several fashions and shapes, that one would have said it were an hanging Parterre. Thus, was the great hall of the *Am-Kas* adorned and set out.

“As to those arched galleries, which I have spoken of, that are round about the courts, each *Omrah* had received order to dress one of them at his own charges. And they now striving who should make his own most stately, there was seen nothing but purpled gold above and beneath, and rich tapestries under foot.”

We must always bear in mind, when visiting Moghul buildings, or studying the history of the men who used them, that the mode of life of the Indian Moghuls under the empire was essentially different from that of modern Europe. Originally nomads, the pattern of such men's life was the life of a camp. Hence we find their palaces conforming to this plan. There is a central pavilion for the shelter and display of the king in the

public administration of justice ; and there is a smaller pavilion in which he could consult with his peers and privy councillors. But all his private life was passed in the women's apartment ; and we look in vain for the cabinets, the drawing-rooms, the halls ornamented with statues, the "glorious galleries" of Windsor or Versailles. The mode of conducting the duties and pleasures of the day has been glanced at in Mr. Sherer's sketch of Fattehpur ; and it cannot be necessary to add to so graceful a picture. A faded resemblance of that way of existence may still be seen in Persia and other states of Central Asia ; but the descriptions of our friend Bernier, and of other contemporary European travellers, must be consulted by those who would form a true and vivid conception of that which fired the imagination of Milton when that most gorgeous of Puritans spoke of

"A throne of royal state which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormus or of Ind."

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## APPENDIX A.

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### NOTE ON HINDUSTANI ARCHITECTURE.

It is customary to hear the buildings about Agra and New Delhi spoken of as Saracenic ; certainly they bear some resemblance to the general characteristics of the school so-called. But since they are separated from that school in every other respect, it is better to treat them as belonging to a school apart, which, for want of a better name, may be called the "Hindustani School." This style of building was naturalised about the middle of the 16th century in Hindustan Proper (the part of the country in which the abovenamed Moghul capitals stood), and it has taken deep root, and is still flourishing actively wherever it has free play.

In the *Historical Note* annexed to this *Guide* has been given a list of the principal buildings of each of the three emperors under whom Hindustani architecture grew to perfection. Between the buildings of Akbar and those of Jahángír will be found little generic difference : and where inscriptions and contemporaneous narrative are wanting, it is not easy to determine from internal evidence to which reign a work belongs. The absence of timber and the sparing use of arches mark both alike. Under Shah Jahán we find Persian ideas predominating, though Hindu treatment still marks the details of the earliest works. As this fades, the inherent faults of design, its stiffness and want of structural representation, become rapidly conspicuous. It will be understood from these remarks that the style referred to is at its best a mixed or eclectic style.

It is true that, in buildings erected by Musalmans for their own use, the arch is much employed, and the

ornamentation is chiefly geometric; while in those peculiar to the Hindus, the architraves rest usually on brackets, and the decoration freely avails itself of vegetable and animal forms, no doubt conventionalised. A curious oblong roof occurs in these latter also; but it grew, so to speak, out of the Tartar dome common to India and Russia; and that dome in its original form is still often used by the Hindus. The latter also, instead of pure vaulting, often terminate their buildings by placing eight walls on four, and covering all with a flat slab. In some instances there are sixteen parapets placed on the upper eight, and a sham dome is produced by curved flagstones meeting in the middle, the whole topped with a square cap-stone.

A good specimen of this kind of work may be seen in the so-called house of Birbul at Fattehpur-Sikri; also in the very curious Jahángíri Mahl of the Agra Fort.

The origin of the eclectic school is evidently, as observed by Fergusson, the adaptation of the old Pathan forms and requirements to the habits of Hindu workmen. But if we ask why such a style was not naturalised till the time of Akbar, an answer can only be found in the beneficent yet powerful character of that ruler's genius.

As long as the Musalman adventurers maintained their connection with Central Asia, India was to them what England was to the Dukes of Normandy. Babar was buried at Kabul; and it was in that country and in Persia that Humáyun, when worried and worsted in India, naturally sought repose. But his son, the Emperor Akbar, was at once the Edward the I even and the Henry the VIII of his race. He saw from the first the propriety, the necessity even, of fusing his system with the natural growth of the soil. Cutting off the communication with the ancient seats of his dynasty, he aimed at a complete social and political amalgamation. He took his wife from the purest Rajput blood; he made a number of Hindu grandees or peers, two of whom at least were among his most confidential servants

he endeavoured to abolish all that was most exclusive and intolerant in the faith of Islam : and he raised the people of the country from a mass of mere tribute paying barbarians to an emancipated and protected—almost a privileged—community.

It was under such influences that the style we are contemplating arose. Retaining the graceful form and brilliant colouring of the Persian mosques and palaces, the eclectic architects of the new school deferred in many directions to the ideas and tastes of the artificers they had to employ. The result was natural and most successful. In many of the buildings so constructed, the vaulted roof, the lofty arch with real voussoirs and keystone, were still a necessity ; but there are edifices, neither rare nor always unimportant, in Fattchpur-Sikri and in the Agra Fort, where the arch and cupola are rigidly excluded, and where nothing exists to remind the beholder of Central Asia except the slender column and the occasional kiosk. Under the fanatical Aurangzeb this system was largely modified. Everything savouring of idolatry and idolators was to be excluded ; and it is probable that only believers were employed as workmen. The same thing that occurred in politics then occurred in art also. The Hindu ideas, divorced for a time from activity, remained in abeyance ; but it was the favoured school that languished and ultimately died. Witness the sudden degeneration of architecture seen in Sufdar Jung's tomb near Delhi, and in the palaces of his descendants at Lucknow ; and hence, while no great Musalman buildings can at the present day be produced, the Hindu continues to preserve many of the graces caught from his old masters, blended with a vitality and an ingenuity all his own.

A good example is seen at Deeg, the summer palace of the Bhurtpoor Rajah. Faults there are no doubt. The depressed domes, used as canopies for windows and loggia-openings, are in themselves permissible ; but when they are found repeated on the interior walls, with



sham drip-stones that serve no purpose, pertinacity of design is clearly felt to be worse than thrown away. Still the arch-like openings, the geometric traceries, the splendor shafts, are all well-suited to the tabernacle-like character of a palace intended chiefly as a retirement from extreme heat; and these are features which the Hindu architect has not originated, however well he may have managed their adoption. It is to be regretted that he had at the same time no better form of dome before him; but the model that he has is utilised "prettily," if nothing more.

There can be no doubt that a dome should be merely the outward expression of the cupola or peripherised arch within the natural ornament and crown of an arched work. Unfortunately the Moghuls brought down with them the unmeaning inflation of the bulbous Tartar form, which corresponds to no existing feature within, and can only express weakness. To the docile Hindu mind a rule is a rule from which he will not deviate if he can help it. Thus has been generated a vicious dome which spoils the massive character of so many otherwise beautiful buildings.

If it be said that this form of dome is the expression of a horse-shoe arch, the simple answer is that such arches were not used in Hindustani architecture of the old pure type, and the bulb-dome could not have been so suggested. It is true that an appearance of this kind is sometimes seen chiefly in Pathan buildings, but it is due to the arrangement of the pilasters supporting the entablature.

Nevertheless it is probably a fact that there is no civilized country that can at the present day compete with India in the buildings it produces, whether for grace of design or elaboration of detail. The visitor of to-day going through the streets of Muttra finds galleries in front of modern private dwellings that are more delicate, more various, and in other respects more generally beautiful than most that are to be seen on the sides of

the Grand Canal of Venice. And these are produced, not by a proud republic in the hour of its greatest strength, but by a subject race, not consulted in their own taxation or law-making, and enslaved to the most senseless and degrading superstitions. The Hindu people, though one of the most ancient of Aryan nations, appears in this, as in many other ways, to possess the fullest share of the vigour of youth. Its taste is seen as much in the colours of the costumes as in the forms of the buildings universally affected. Well for it, we can abstain from depraving its taste in colour and form with our Public Works Department constructions and our aniline dyes.

The following Note, written for the Universal Exhibition of Vienna, is added as an amplification of the above for those who wish to pursue the subject:—

*Note on the Stone Industries of Agra.*

A.D.

Foundation of first Pathan School under Kutub-ud-din Aibuk, about	...	...	1200
[Principal specimen, <i>Tomb of Altumsh</i> ]	...	...	1235
Second school or period of Toghluk Shah	...	...	1320
[P. S. <i>Tomb of T. S.</i> , roof in a flat dome slightly pointed expressive of their arch, about the same date.]			
Third Pathan period, S. Shah [P. S. <i>Kila Kona Mosque</i> ]	...	...	1540
Commencement of Moghul School (under Akbar)			1556
[P. S. <i>Fattehpur-Sikri</i> ], from 1566 to about	...	...	1630
Turning point of Moghul Architecture when Hindu work was eliminated by Shah Jahán	...	...	1640
Earliest colouring about	1540	Completion of	
Inlaying of Itmád-ud-Daulah	...	Jamma Musjid at	
	1620	Agra, 1639 to 1644.	
Khas Mahl of Agra	1630—1637	Taj completion,	
Taj Mahl	...1630—1648	1648.	

Agra, with the neighbouring country from Gwalior round by Jaipur to Delhi, has long been the seat of several very beautiful arts which may be thus classified—

- (i) *Munubbut-kari*; or Indian *pietra dura* [participle passive, second conjugation of *nubt*, an Arabic word signifying “to plant,” “to cause, to germinate.”]\*
- (ii) *Jali*; pierced screen-work in marble or sandstone.
- (iii) *Soapstone* carving; a new art.

Before describing each of these in detail, it will be as well to give a brief sketch of the history of architecture, as it exists in this tract of country, as the mother-art to which the decorative arts are in the main subsidiary. The practice of uniting soapstone carving with architecture has not yet been attempted; though it is very suitable for the decoration of the interior of small buildings at least; and its introduction some time or other is not unlikely. But the other two industries are primarily and essentially architectural; and any specimens utilized for another purpose must only be regarded in the light of samples.

The origin of the eclectic school of architecture prevalent to this day in Upper India is to be found in the adaptation of the old Pathan ideas to the habits of Hindu workmen. Like English-Gothic, Hindustani architecture has had five periods, although, unlike English-Gothic, it is still a living art. And the five periods are chiefly marked out one from the other by the presence or absence of the influence of the unoriginate but patient craftsmen of alien blood and pagan creed, who lent their cheap yet precious labour to the works of their Moslem masters, and who are still working

\* So SHAKESPEAR.—The *Ghais-ool-Loghat* and other Asiatic authorities regard the word as referring to things raised from the ground like plants; it would thus imply *relievo*, such as the images on friezes, cameos or coins. The Hindu word is *puhchikari*; “adhesive work,” perhaps a corruption of *purchunkari*, the Persian term.

out the problems suggested by that most fortunate combination.

*First Period.*—The foundation of the school of which I am speaking may be assigned to the *Ghori* conquerors, the first fine product of the eclectic architecture of Hindustan being the tomb of Altumsh at old Delhi. This monument, built about A.D. 1235, stands at the north-west corner of the great mosque attached to the Kutub Minar, and is considered by Mr. Fergusson (II, 651) to be one of the richest examples of Hindu art applied to Mahomedan purposes that Delhi has to show. He adds, however, that the builders still display a certain degree of inaptness in fitting the details to their new uses. It has no roof; and it has been doubted if it was ever intended to have one.\*

The walls are 7 feet in thickness; and the interior forms a square of over 29 feet, the panels of which are beautifully decorated. The same authority speaks of this period as remarkable rather for a stern severity of style and gloomy appropriateness than for the lighter graces of architectural design. Nevertheless, this tomb, together with the arches of the Great Mosque, the Alai Durwaza, and the Kutub itself, are all testimonies to the handiwork of Hindu craftsmen on Musalman design.

*Second Period.*—After lasting about a century this style gave way to the second period, that of increased gloom and hardness; and the rude grandeur spoken of by Fergusson at page 653. Specimens of this are to be found in the tomb of Toghluk Shah (outside the south wall of the ruined city of Toghlukabad), some ten miles south of modern Delhi, or Shahjuhanabad, and the *Kulu* or *Kulan Musjid* (near the Toorkman Gate of the modern city)\*. These buildings are in fine taste: and though severely simple do not entirely disdain the use of colour. In the tomb of Toghluk

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\* General Cunningham considers it was certainly roofed "with an overlapping Hindu dome."

particularly, good use is made of "bands and borders of white marble on the large sloping surface of redstone. The horseshoe arches are of white marble, and a broad band of the same goes completely round the building at the springing of the arches. Another broad band of white marble, in upright slabs, 4 feet in height, goes all round the dome just above its springing."—(*Cunningham*.) The mosque is believed by the same eminent authority to have been entirely covered with a coating of coloured plaster, most of which has now fallen off. It is probable that the Musalmans had now become independent of Hindu aid, as afterwards, no doubt happened in the corresponding Moghul period of Shah Jahán. The use of the true arch, with voussoirs and keystone, is universal. It was probably introduced towards the end of the preceding period, as (down at least to the death of Altumsh) the arched openings are only cut out of horizontal courses.

*Third Period.*—It is the period beginning with the short *Sur* dynasty in 1540 that we find colour first introduced, generally and boldly. The system of encaustic tiling had been introduced about the end of the thirteenth century in Persia, where the ruined mosque of Tabreez is said still to glow with a most elaborate play of pattern and of hue. The first fine specimen of this art in Upper India seems to be the *Kila Kona* Mosque in the *Poráná Killa*, which was the citadel of Sher Shah's city, just outside the "Delhi Gate," of the modern town.

This building exemplifies the words in which Fergusson describes this brief but splendid period—

"The facades . . . became more ornamental, and more frequently encrusted with marbles, and always adorned with sculpture of a rich and beautiful character: the angles of the building relieved by little kiosques . . . but never with minarets, which, so far as I know, were not attached to mosques during the Páthan period." (*Hist. Archit.* II, p. 655). "Coloured tiles were

now freely employed ; and the style is altogether remarkable as the natural precursor of the existing school."

*Fourth Period.*—The Moghul School of Hindustani architecture, the basis of modern practice, arose under Akbar, the celebrated grandson of the Conqueror Babar, in the time of whose incapable son the brief dynasty and school above referred to had flourished. The new school differs from its predecessor in two things chiefly—

(i) The employment of Hindu treatment, which had been accidental, capricious and fluctuating, was undertaken on a declared system of eclecticism and amalgamation.

(ii) The effects of colour were much bolder than heretofore, and variegated marbles were generally used in place of encaustic tinting.

Chief among the works of this time (in order of date) are—

	A.D.
The Fort at Agra from ... ..	1566
The Palace at Fátteh-pur-Sikri from about	1570—1600
The Tomb of Akbar at Sikandra ...	1608—1613
The Tomb of Itmád-ud-Daulah ...	1621

To which may be added the group of tombs at Lahore of some five years later than the last-mentioned date. (These were once decorated both with tiles and inlaying, but the Sikhs have injured both, especially the latter.)

Between the works of Akbar and those of his son and immediate successor Jahángír will be found little generic difference ; and, wherever, inscriptions and contemporaneous writings are wanting, it is hard to determine from internal evidence to which reign a work belongs. The absence of the use of timber, the fine stone-chiselling and the sparing employment of the true arch, mark both alike. Under Shah Jahán, however, these things disappear, while a new element comes into prominence.

*Fifth Period.*—At the end of 1627, Shah Jahán succeeded his father Jahángír, and at once began the most splendid series of buildings that modern times have seen.

The Indian Saracenic school of Shah Jahán is seen to have modified the preceding eclecticism and to have adopted a softness of contour and a use of dazzling detail which trembles on the line that separates pretension from true dignity; and though its happiest efforts are unique in their charm, yet all its virtues lean to vice's side, and a fall is felt to be impending. Persian ideas predominate, though Hindu practice is not at first entirely eliminated from the details. It is only as the healthy industrious influence fades that the inherent faults of this last development of Moghul art become fully conspicuous, the still outlines and flat surfaces, the effeminate curves, the want of carved ornament, and of true structural representation.

The following severe but important criticism on the Taj is extracted from some notes that appeared in the *Pioneer* in February 1874, evidently by a competent writer: "The Taj has no constructional merits but those of the most ordinary sort. It is a large, cubical mass of masonry, with truncated corners, veneered only with white marble, and pierced with large hollow gaping excavations, in which there is nothing either on their external borders or on their interior surfaces to carry off the bareness of these cavernous recesses. The only use for which these appear to have been designed was to afford openings for meaningless fenestrations, which admit so little light into the interior that the tomb itself has to be visited by candle light, and they exhibit so little attempt at anything like design, that their blank, staring poverty can induce no interest of any description. To these cavernous recesses alone is the edifice indebted for all it has of relief or play of light and shade. The masonry, which is not thus excavated, is flat and barren, and there are none of those deep indentations and bold projections in which the earlier Mahomedan architects so much delighted, and in the arrangement and disposition of which they displayed so much skill. But instead of these we have flat bands bearing Arabic

inscriptions, not raised, as the older builders would have done them, bordering them with broad, crisp mouldings and interlacings, but inlaid with black marble upon the white without any relieving bordering, so that the bare blankness of the whole is absolutely augmented by this violent, vulgar contrast of black scrawlings on a white ground in the full glare of the sun. So great is this poverty of relief, that the builder found it necessary to eke out the meagre little streaks of shadow, which is all his weak projections could give, by surrounding his panellings and bands with a narrow edging of black marble, also inlaid, not at any distance from these projections, but close into them, added as it were by a kind of afterthought whereby he has perpetuated a flagrant evidence of the meagreness of his architectural skill. Inlaid work of this and other descriptions has been largely but vulgarly employed all over the exterior of the building. No good architect would ever have used decoration of this sort in external work without associating it abundantly with carved and moulded ornamentation, whereby his own appreciation of the value of such work, both in its material and its labour, should be indicated, and the work itself protected and cared for. Then, too, the patterns of these inlayings are meagre in the extreme. None more so than those in the spandrels of the large central archways, which are filled in with coarse, lanky, meaningless scrolls, in which there is neither unity of design, elegance of form, nor constructive arrangements of any sort."

Somewhat to the same effect, though with less of positiveness, have been other and still later criticisms. The remarks in the text \* are intended to meet the best of these comments; and I may perhaps be allowed to sum up the architectural question in the following extract from one of my own contributions to the controversy. It is taken from a daily paper of April 1876 :

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\* *Sup.*, p. 27.



"The so-called 'Taj Mehal' of Agra is a vast mass of masonry, faced with thick plates of plain or decorated white marble, looking on one side to a vast expanse of rectangular grove and garden, on the other on a terrace at whose foot flows the River Jumna. About a mile from the Fort of Agra, on the road towards the village of Samoghar (where stand the stone records of the victory gained by Aurangzeb over the ill-fated Dara, his elder brother and the designate heir of the empire), the traveller passes by the lofty ornamented gateway amid an enclosure of red sandstone cloisters. Framed in the further archway, appears an avenue of dark Italian cypresses. Down the line between, sparkles a long row of fountains, each tossing up a feathery plume of water or a thin jet fifteen feet high. At the end, on a terrace of white marble raised twenty-six feet above the level of the garden, rise the gleaming walls and loftily curving dome that have so long and far been famous.

"Is this, as honest Bernier thought, one of the wonders of the world, worthy to rank with the temple of Diana at Ephesus or the Great Pyramid; or is it, as our neologists assert, a mere caprice in unpaid-for material, a meretricious monument of lust? To give any sort of answer to such a question, we must have some common point of departure, some art speech that all can understand.

"Architecture consists of two important elements, not each of like importance, yet necessary and essential the one to the other. These principles are construction, including design—and finish, implying decoration. Beauty of *form* may be found in a wave, a waterspout, a rock; each strong and graceful for its purpose, yet none calculated to give the whole pleasure of a work of art. Loveliness of *ornament* may be found in a tree, a flower, a butterfly, none of them claiming to be considered types for the close imitation of man. To produce a work therefore that shall permanently fix the praise

and gratitude of intelligent beings, you must bring into combination the strength and serviceableness of fine form with the apt exciting harmonies of detail. And your building can less afford to dispense with any of the first, than to lose a certain portion of the second.

"Tried by this test, the Taj certainly fails. The general design consists of a cube with truncated angles, opposite each of which is a detached tower, terminating just below the springing of the dome from the summit of the cube. No relation can be discovered among the heights of other dimensions of the parts, nor any expression of practical purpose in the great majority of them. The turnip-shaped dome does not correspond to the form of the inward vault, the minarets are useless incumbrances in a structural point of view; the windows give no light. The extreme straightness of outline bounds the building, while it takes away all that air of stately strength, which is given by the curved or sloping sides of *Pathan* buildings; and the sky-line, if not so actually a dead level as in some contemporary works, is still distinctly wanting in aspiration. Many of these faults are more or less masked by the really magnificent foliage of the modern garden; but, judging from old pictures and descriptions, we may feel sure that this masking was no part of the original intention. And it is a small but significant detail that, so far from being as is generally supposed an artist king, versed in every detail of his beautiful toy, Shah Jahán was no more acquainted with the exact dimensions of the Taj than was Jahángír with the names of the mothers of his sons. In his memoirs the emperor declares that the tomb was 296 feet high: measured by a theodolite in 1872, it turned out to be only 243½.

"It is when we turn to the ornamentations, the colouring, the style, the whole delicious harmony that makes up the idea of 'taste,' that we see how, in spite of all these and numerous other pedantries of art, the Taj charms, and always must charm. In the words of Bay-

ard Taylor: 'So light it seems, so airy, and so like a fabric of mist and moonbeams, with its great dome soaring up a silvery bubble, that even after you have touched it, and climbed to its summit, you may almost doubt its reality.'

Nevertheless to give a catalogue of the works of this school would be to name all the buildings (excepting the Kutab Minar) which have made Indian Musalman architecture best known in Europe. The dates of some of the principal examples follow:—

The <i>Khas Mahl</i> , or private apartments of Agra Fort,	...	...	...	1637
begun about 1628, completed	...	...	...	
The Palace at new Delhi	...	...	...	1637
The Jamma Musjid of Agra	...	...	...	1644
The Taj Mahl of ditto	...	...	...	1648
The Moti Musjid of ditto	...	...	...	1653
The Jamma Musjid at Delhi	...	...	...	1658

From the accession of Shah Jahán to his deposition by Aurangzeb is a period of thirty years, during which Moghul art culminated and commenced its decline. The same thing that occurred in politics occurred in art also. The Hindu practice, divorced for a time from activity, languished in suspense, but it was the active partner that was doomed to die. While the Moghul architects have sunk from the Taj to the tomb of Sufdur Jung, and from the palaces of Shah Jahán to the stucco nightmares of Lucknow, the Hindu has caught up and retained all that was best in the art of his employers, and has blended it with a vitality and an ingenuity all his own. Jaipur and Muttra attest his excellence in carving, and the ateliers of Núthu and Purusram of Agra equal in finish of execution the finished *pietra dura* of the inlayers of the Taj. These industries are extant at this day in this small tract of country in executive perfection, and give it the honourable distinction of harbouring two arts that are unique among the arts of the world. As there is no civilized country that can at the present day claim superiority over India in the buildings

that it contains, so none can beat the people of this part of India in the eye for colour, or the hand for elaborate workmanship. The traveller of to-day, going through Northern Rajputana and the land of Brij, finds galleries being placed in front of modern dwellings that need not shrink from comparison with the *loggie* of the Grand Canal. The workshops of Agra continue to turn out samples of inlaying that rival in taste and finish the famous ornamentation of the Medicean Chapel. In natural and political science England has a lesson for the East. In art the people of this country is the master of its conquerors, as of old. But the successors of the Moghul cannot contribute beneficially as their predecessors did. Yet the Hindu mind is so docile and receptive that there is a danger of their arts being corrupted by intercourse with those from whom they are learning lessons in the practical sciences and their application. The vulgar maxim that "Time is money," and the vain craving for obvious utility of the pedestrian kind are spoiling art in England, and if not jealously guarded against will spoil it here. A friend writes on this point—

"Admitting that what has here been called *Munubut* was originally applied to geometric patterns only, it seems almost to have deserted them now if you are to judge by the Agra workshops. The difference between the older, or *Taj* work, and that which seems now to be coming into vogue, is that the former is symmetrical, and has a certain amount of stiffness in consequence, while the latter strives rather to follow the natural forms and irregular dispositions of flowers, butterflies, and birds. Except in minuteness of finish, I see no difference between the present work and the flat *pietra dura* of Florence. This is a sad result of European interference."

Mosaic work appears to have had its origin in the East, the land of leisure and of luxury; and to have passed over to the Roman Empire in the times of its

Eastern conquests, only to travel back to its native home in later times.

The first mention of inlaying as applied to architecture occurs in the Bible. In the book of Esther, the Palace at Susa, now a mass of almost indistinguishable decay, is described as having "a pavement of red and blue, and white and black marble." Borrowed by the Romans the art became what is now known by the distinctive name of "Mosaic;" that is, "the art of producing artistic designs by setting small squares of stone or glass of different colours, so as to give the effect of painting;" and continued to be a purely Italian art which it is necessary to distinguish from the architectural practice which forms our present subject. The etymology of the word "Mosaic" is unknown, so that it might equally appropriately be used of either branch of the inlayer's art. But, inasmuch as the word has already its well-defined and well-known application, while Hindustani inlaying is properly architectural rather than pictorial, and is not produced by tessellation but by the insertion of large masses of jewel into blocks of white marble so as to form geometrical patterns rather than pictorial designs, it is well to leave the term as we find it. I propose to call Indian inlaying by the name of "*Indian pietra dura*."

This form of the art is peculiar to Moghul India, and in India to the particular region with which this paper is concerned. Besides the use of enamelled tiles, the Indian Mahomedans adopted early the application of coloured stones, gradually elaborated from the simple courses of Toghluks' tomb to the minute decoration now in vogue. The art in its best condition is commended by Fergusson as "the great characteristic of Moghul architecture after the death of Akbar." As to who introduced it, authentic history is silent. Its first appearance may perhaps be cited in the gate of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. Twenty years later it appears, still in large and purely arabesque patterns, on the tomb of

Itmád-ud-Daulah. Tradition says that its first development in the time of Shah Jahán was due to Persian artists; and this synchronizes with the arrival at that monarch's court of the distinguished amateur Ali Murdan Khan, the designer of the Delhi Palace and of the canal that supplied it with water. Up to this time the geometric traceries of the early inlayings are seen timidly borrowing a few floral forms—witness Shah Jahán's Palace in the Agra Fort. Immediately after, however, appears the fully introduction of flower-work in the screen that surrounds the tombs in the Taj Mahal; and the vexed question arises, how was this revolution accomplished, and by whom? In the ten years that elapsed between the fort buildings and the work at the Taj, what influence had introduced an attempt at realization of leaves, stalks, and petals which, if not happily arrested, would perhaps have degenerated into a mongrel and rococo style.

I think it probable that the traditional belief, that European taste is here answerable, is not wholly unfounded. The Taj is believed to have been designed by a Venetian and built by Isa Effendi, a Constantinople Turk, while the Palace at Delhi was decorated by Austin de Bordeaux, the accomplished French adventurer. That Byzantium was the home of true Mosaic is well known, and the kindred art had been in vogue for about eighty years previous in Northern Italy; with which Austin was doubtless acquainted.\* It is thus described in Sir D. Brewster's *Encyclopædia*—

"Analogous to Mosaic is the *pietra dura* of Florence, which consists of irregular portions of hard stones, containing the gradation of colours in each, instead of obtaining that gradation by the union of multiplied frag-

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\* There was formerly a good deal of work attributed to Austin at Delhi including *pietra* pictures of birds, beasts, and his own likeness in the character of a long-haired Orpheus playing on the violin. Fortunately the dignity of the Taj was not compromised by any such realistic efforts.

ments." This, it may be observed, is an almost exact definition (as far as it goes) of the modern Indian *pietra dura* as seen in the screen of the Taj and its reproductions of to-day. And the three and-a-half flowers still pointed out by the curators as the work of the "master's" own hand have effects of shadow and of reversed leaf-ends in the style which exceed the limits of the pure conventional.\*

However originated, this work is now practised chiefly by Hindus. A few Musalmans at the Taj maintain an unsuccessful rivalry with the more painstaking workmen of indigenous blood; but they have never—as far as I am aware—exhibited while the two Hindu artists already mentioned have been honourably noticed and rewarded with medals, both in Indian and European exhibitions.

The practice of their art is very simple. The master-workman traces with delicate exactness a pencil outline of the design to be produced upon a slab of the whitest Jaipur marble. The slab is then handed over to one craftsman, and a collection of jewels to another. The chief jewels used are agate, cornelian, jasper, bloodstone, lapis-lazuli, and turquoise. Each piece has its bed prepared on the master's tracing on the surface of the slab, while it is shaped by the associated workman. As

\* It is to be observed that, though Bernier does not notice the inlaid work at Delhi, he particularly compares that of the Taj to *pietra* of the Medicean Chapel. "You see such sort of stones as are employed to enrich the chapel of the Great Duke of Florence." But he does not notice the floral screen. Is it possible that this and some of the work at Delhi were added after his visit to Aurangzeb?

Mandelsso and Thevenot saw some inlay at Delhi which they ascribed to Shah Jahan; on the other hand that of the *Dewan-Am* at Agra is certainly of the reign of Aurangzeb. The *Dewan-Am* of the earlier travellers down to Tavernier in 1666 would have been surely mentioned as ornamented by some of them had it been so. The date of the present building is A.D. 1684 (vide *sup.*, p. 17), and the presumption is that the earlier throne-room was comparatively plain, like the contemporary building of the same kind at Fattchpur-Sikri (vide *sup.*, p. 93).

each piece is ready, it is handed to the inlayer who fits it into its place with a cement of white lime. It is then covered with a small piece of glass, over which is laid a fragment of burning charcoal. When the annealing process is complete, the glass is removed; and, when the whole design has been inlaid in this manner, the surface is rubbed over with a polishing powder, and the work is ready. When the cutter and the inlayer have done their respective offices with due skill, no trace of the annealing is perceptible. In second-class work, a small rim of cement may always be detected by its greater whiteness, separating the precious stone—whatever it be—from the bed of marble.

As to the uses of this art, it has been already shown that it is essentially architectural. The jambs of great portals in a Moghul tomb, the pillars of a Palace-hall, should have their borders of bold arabesque. The panels of the interior admit of the more delicate floral tracery of the latter school. But this, the original and legitimate application of the art, is in abeyance. Europeans are too unsettled, and the wealthy natives too negligent to allow of their dwellings being beautified by the costly method. The patient workmen, therefore, have turned their attention to making smaller specimens of their art, which is now chiefly confined to tables, inkstands, trays, plates, and paper-weights. The time required to mature even these comparatively unimportant works is still considerable, and the prices commanded are not small. An average table will take two men from six to twelve months to complete; and when the value of the materials is taken into consideration, will not perhaps appear too expensive at a cost of from £30 to £100, according, of course, to the amount of labour and material.\*

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\* The mural *pietra dura* of the Palace of Shah Jahán in Agra Fort has been partially restored by these men at the charge, and under the orders, of the British Government.



The other characteristic stone industry of Agra and its neighbourhood is called *Jāli*. On the carved tracery of this part of India Mr. Fergusson only remarks:—

"There are some exquisite specimens of tracery in marble at Agra and Delhi, but none quite equal to this (of Ahmedabad in the Dekkan)." This, however, *pace tante viri*, appears somewhat hasty criticism, there being little more similitude between the Southern and Northern schools of tracery than there is between point-lace and Honiton flowers. The *Jāli* of Upper India is a fine filigree of marble or sandstone fretted in to an almost endless network of geometrical combinations, such as can only be understood by seeing the carvings themselves or good photographs, if then. If then, because such is the complication of the lines that the greatest geometricians may be puzzled to analyse the designs. The same author thus accounts for the invention of this art:—"Every form of a Hindu temple was reproduced except in one particular. In the angles of all Hindu temples are niches containing images. This the Moslem could not tolerate, so he filled them with tracery . . . . After a century's experience they produced forms which, as architectural ornaments, will in their own class stand comparison with any employed at any age or in any part of the world; and in doing this they invented a class of window tracery in which also they were unrivalled."

In Northern India the use of some material that should, like glass, afford protection from weather, while, unlike glass, it admitted of free ventilation, led to a great elaboration of this last, or window-tracery, class. Almost all the Pathan and Moghul buildings are full of these minute yet everlasting pieces of fretwork. The marble screens that go on all four sides of the open chamber on the summit of Akbar's Mausoleum at Sikandra are as fresh as when first executed more than two hundred and sixty years ago, and each screen contains twelve panels—except where a panel in the centre has been left open for the view—and there are three

different patterns of panel in each screen. The upper chamber of Itmád-ud-Daulah's tomb is all lace-work of the same kind; and the Fort and Taj have also elaborate examples of this work, one panel in the screen round the cenotaphs in the latter being carved out of a single slab of marble over 6 feet high.

Of marble tracery at Delhi there are fine examples of all ages, probably all the work of the Hindu artizans, and appearing to increase in fineness and intricacy as it reaches modern times. Among the earliest are the window screens in the beautiful building, just behind the Kutub Minar, known as Ala-ud-din's Gate, and dated A.D. 1310. The tracery here is bold and massive, in harmony with the tone of the whole work, which is the latest and perhaps finest specimen extant of the first Pathan period. In the enclosure of Nizam-ud-din's tomb (close by the mausoleum of the Emperor Humáyun) are tracery screens in white marble from the middle of the fourteenth century down to that of Mirza Jahángír, constructed in 1832. As a mere piece of workmanship this last excels the rest: and the tombs comprised in this small cemetery will be found very interesting to those who wish to compare the work of various distant epochs.

But all the marble-work of this region is surpassed by the monument which Akbar erected over the remains of his friend and spiritual counsellor Shekh Sulím Chishti at Fátteh-pur Sikri (1581 A.D.). In the north-west angle of a vast court-yard, 433 feet by 366 feet, is a pavilion externally of white marble surrounded by a deep projecting dripstone, of white marble also, supported by marble shafts crowned by most fantastic brackets, shaped like the letter S.\* The outer screens are so minutely pierced that they actually look like lace at a little distance, and illuminate the mortuary chamber within with a solemn half-light which resembles nothing else that I have seen. The whole of this elaborate work, including the strange but most pleasing design of

the brackets, appear to have been produced by the resident stone-cutters of the place, uneducated men earning probably, an average wage of about a penny a day. I believe that no instance of such pure patient workmanship, so dignified yet so various, is to be found in the world. The sandstone *Jali* is used sometimes in the interior of apartments, such as the female galleries from which, as in our House of Commons, the ladies could look down on the meetings of men in halls below. But more commonly the work occurs in balustrades and parapets, where it has a fine effect. This stone comes from the Fattehpur quarries, or from Bhurtpoor; the white marble from Mukrana in the Jodhpur territories. The difference both in the cost of material and labour is very great; a small slab of marble carving of this kind will cost £10, while one of sandstone can be obtained for one-tenth of the price.

Lastly must be mentioned the modern practice of carving in soapstone. This material appears to be a steatite of somewhat tough texture and a warm grey tint. It comes from a place in the dominions of His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur, and unless too sharp or high, it stands like leather though it cuts like cheese. It forms into beautifully clean patterns, either floral or arabesque, which are made into boxes, card trays, and such like articles of drawing-room use. But a time may be hoped for when this cheap and pretty work may be extended to architectural decoration. I am not informed as to its powers of standing weather; but in the interior of halls and reception rooms its introduction on white walls and ceilings would have a fine effect, either as cornices, or mantel-mouldings. A handsome piece of soapstone carving may be had for a few rupees; and the decoration of a whole dining-room with it could hardly be more expensive than the decoration of the same walls with English paper-hangings.

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## APPENDIX B.

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### RULES FOR REDUCING HIJRI YEARS TO • THE CORRESPONDING DATE OF CHRIST- IAN ERA.

THERE is this difficulty to be provided against in comparing Hijri with Christian years, that the former is a lunar year of 354 days, the latter being the tropical or solar year consisting (as is well known) of about 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ . The difference will be seen by observing that the era begins from 15th July 622, when the prophet retired from Mecca, and the present Hijri year (year of the Hegira) is 1288-1289, which, if the mere addition were made, would make the present Christian year 1910. To correct this the following rough method may be adopted :—

From the given number of Hijri years deduct 3 per cent., and to the remainder add the number 622. The sum obtained gives the year A.D. in which the Musalman year in question terminated.

• A more troublesome but more accurate process is as follows :

Express the Hijri date in years and decimals of a year, multiply by .97 and add to the product 621.55. The sum will be the date A.D.

*e.g.*, 1289.23 (=third month)  $\times$  .97 = 1250.56 + 621.55 = 1872.11 = 9th February, 1872, A.D.

---

## APPENDIX C.

### RULE FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF CHRONOGRAMS.

هوز	ابجد
۵ و ز	۱ ب ج د
۷ ۶ ۵	۴ ۳ ۲ ۱
کلمن	حطی
ک ل م ن	ح ط ی
۵۰ ۴۰ ۳۰ ۲۰	۱۰ ۹
قرش	سعفس
ق ر ش ت	س ع ف ص
۴۰۰ ۳۰۰ ۲۰۰ ۱۰۰	۹۰ ۸۰ ۷۰ ۶۰
ضظغ	ثخذ
ض ظ غ	ث خ ذ
۱۰۰۰ ۹۰۰ ۸۰۰	۷۰۰ ۶۰۰ ۵۰۰

تا یا ز الف یگان یگان ساز مضاف

و نگاه زیاده کن ده ده تا قاف

بز قاف زیاده کن صد صد تا غین

اینست حساب ابجد و نیست خلاف

"From (۱) to (ی) increase by units, and from  
thence to (ق) by tens; the increments from (ق) to خ

are hundreds. Proceed by this rule and you will get the *Abjud* calculations free from error."

e. g. Chronogram of Mosque at Fattehpur-Sikri  
ثاني المسجد الحرام أحمد (last word omitted) 500 + 1 + 50  
+ 10 + 1 + 30 + 40 + 60 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 30 + 8  
+ 200 + 1 + 40 = 979 A.H.

The chief composer of inscriptions in the time of Akbar was a noble of Sindh named Mir Masum, whose works are found from the Fort at Mandu to Tubreez in Persia. " The inscriptions on the Mosque and Shrine of Fattehpur-Sikri are by him.—(Blochmann *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 514.)

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## APPENDIX D.

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### SOMNATH GATES.

THE following letter from the well-known Artist Mr. W. Simpson ought to be read by all who wish to judge of the origin and character of these disputed doors. It was addressed to the *Daily News* of London on the death of Lord Ellenborough :—

SIR,—In your leading article of to-day upon the late Lord Ellenborough you naturally make reference to the Gates of Somnath. They were the great point of his celebrated proclamation after the Cabul War, and became the palpable evidence to the religious minds of the Hindu as well as the Mussulman population of India, that the avenging army had done its work, and that the Angrezzi Raj was still supreme. The present may be a fair opportunity for clearing up what is not generally known about these gates, and they have occupied such a very important place in our Indian history that it is right that the truth should be known. I may tell you how I first became acquainted with them. In 1860 they were in the Dewan-i-Am, or Public Hall of Audience, in the Fort of Agra, where I suppose they still remain ; but would suggest that their proper place ought to be the South Kensington Museum. I made a very careful sketch of them, including details of the ornament. As I sketched, it struck me as strange that the art contained nothing Hindu in its design. It was all purely Mahomedan. Out of the thirty-two million of Hindu gods there was not one of them visible. This was so strange that I began making inquiries as to whether they really were the veritable Gates of Somnath. The answer always was that there should be no doubt

of it, and Lord Ellenborough's proclamation was in every case referred to. To an artist historical evidence, or even proclamation by a Governor-General, goes little when there is a style of art opposed to them, so my doubts clung to me. Before leaving India I had the opportunity of putting the question to Lord Canning, a man far from indifferent to questions of this sort, but even with him Lord Ellenborough's proclamation was the infallible guide. It was only on my return to England, and in conversation with Mr. Fergusson, that I got confirmation of what I suspected. He agreed with me that the ornament was sufficient evidence that they could not possibly be the Gates of Somnath; but he added—what I had not the opportunity of learning in India—that the gates in the Dewan-i-Am at Agra had been inspected with a microscope, and they are of "Deodar pine" and not of sandal wood. This fact, in spite of the proclamation, would command a verdict against them from any jury.

Puttun Somnath, in Goojerat, contained one of the most celebrated temples of the Brahmins. Mahmud of Ghuzni, shortly after he came to the throne in A.D. 877, made a raid into India for the double purpose of destroying idolatry and looting in that well-to-do country. The wealth of Somnath led this Mahomedan hero in that direction, and after a desperate resistance he took the place. Amongst the plunder he carried back to Cabul the gates of the temple. They were of sandal wood, and of great celebrity from their elaborate ornament. After Mahmud's death these gates were put on his tomb, and were treasured as evidences of Mahomedan conquest. The probability would seem to be that the original gates were destroyed by fire, and when the tomb was repaired, a new set of gates were made of Deodar. These gates are not new, for they bear many evident marks of age. Panels are smashed, and much of the ornament destroyed; rude repairs are done with scraps of wood and iron; and, curious link between east



and west, there are a number of horse-shoes nailed upon these old portals. As they were brought from Mahmud's tomb at Ghuzni by our conquering army, they were an evidence to the Hindu population of India that our power had no rival in the East. So far Lord Ellenborough's proclamation is correct enough, but now as their political significance has ceased to be, it ought to be known, for historical and archæological reasons, that they are not the gates of Somnath.

*December 23rd.*

WILLIAM SIMPSON.

Lastly, it may be as well to mention that there is no real evidence that Mahmud ever carried away any gates from Somnath at all.—H. G. K.

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## APPENDIX E.

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### POPULATION OF AGRA EXCLUDING THE SUBURBS.

Mahomedans	...	...	...	...	38,328
Hindus	...	...	...	...	97,372
Christians	...	...	...	...	4,073
Jains	...	...	...	...	1,009
Other religions	...	...	...	...	406
					<hr style="width: 10%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>
					141,188
Male ...	...	77,368	Female	...	63,820

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